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RURAL LIFE IN THE VEDIC AGE

by

Ram Kishore Srivastava

Head of the Ancient History Department

K. S. SAKET POSTGRADUATE COLLEGE, FAIZABAD

1230

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

IN

Ancient History Archaeology And Culture

Avadh University

FAIZABAD

Supervisor

Dr. B. N. Puri, M. A. LL. B. Ph. D. (Oxford), U. G. C.

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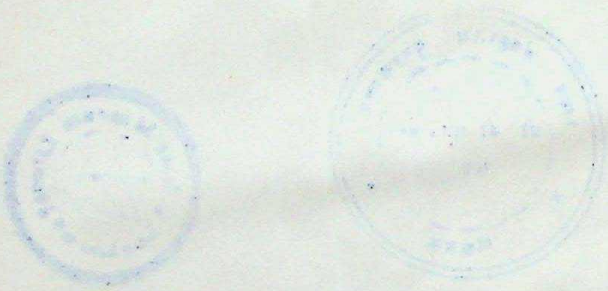

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To

Dr. B. N. Puri

with respectful regards.

R K Srivastava.

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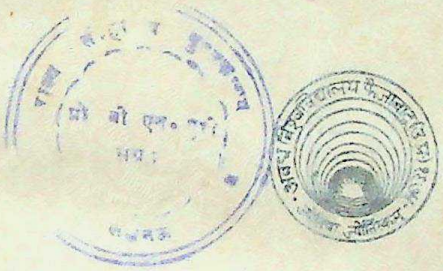

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This is to certify that Sri Ram Kishore Srivastava, Head of the department of Ancient History, Archaeology and Culture, K.S. Saket Postgraduate College, Faizabad has worked for the full prescribed period of more than two hundred days, as prescribed under the ordinance of Avadh University, under my supervision and guidance. His thesis entitled "Rural Life in the Vedic Age" embodies the result of his investigations and is based on his original research work. I recommend that the thesis may be submitted for evaluation.

B.N. Puri

(Dr. B.N. Puri)
U.G.C. Prof. and Retired Prof.
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D E D I C A T E D T O

M Y P A R E N T S

whose love and affection had been
the everlasting source of inspiration.

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पुरेरेणुकुण्ठित शरीरस्तत्परिपूर्ण नेत्रवदनश्च ।

नगरे वसन् सिद्धिमवाप्स्यतीति न तदस्ति ।।

बौधायन धर्म सूत्र ।

Nobody living in the city, with his body covered with the dust of the city and his eyes and mouth filled with it can attain Salvation even if he leads an austere life.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost,I express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr.B.N.Puri,M.A.,LL.B,Ph.D.,for his genial supervision and inspiring guidance through out the period of the research. I am indebted to him for the pains he took in going through the manuscript and offering valuable comments to bring this thesis in the present form.

My thanks are also extended to Prof.U.N.Rai,department of Ancient History,Allahabad University for the suggestion of this topic of research.I am very grateful to Dr.A.P.Mehrotra, Vice-chancellor Avadh University,whose constant encouragement went a great way in the accomplishment of my research work. I would also thank my colleagues of the department of Ancient History,K.S.Saket Postgraduate College ,Faizabad for their constant encouragement.My obligations are due to the cordial staff of the library of K.S.Saket Postgraduate College,Faizabad for extending me their cooperation. I also take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to my students Sri.Har Sahai Singh,Sri Ambika Prasad,Dr.Ram Behari Upadhyaya and Sri Anand Prakash Gaur for their cooperation.For excellent typing of the thesis I am thankful to Sri Shyam Bahadur Pandey.

I am very much obliged to my father-in-law Sri B.R.Kishore for providing me books from different libraries of Allahabad. I acknowledge with gratefulness the help and encouragement given by my elder brothers Sri P.C.Srivasteva and Sri T.N. Srivasteva.

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I would also like to mention that my wife Smt. Aruna Srivasteva, who goaded me to complete this thesis, has cheerfully put up with all the domestic worries. I acknowledge her forbearance. Finally, I have to thank my daughters Mona and Deepali who are a constant source of my inspiration and are the prize of my life.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Ait.Br.	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
AL.	Altindisches Leben, by H. Zimmer.
Ar.	Āraṇyaka.
A.V.	Atharvaveda.
Br.	Brāhmaṇa.
Bṛih.	Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.
Chand.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad.
JBORS	Journal of Behar and Orissa Research Society, Patna.
Kāṭh.Saṃ.	Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā.
Kauś.Br.	Kaushitaki Brāhmana.
Kauś.Up.	Kaushitaki Upaniṣad.
Kauś.S.	Kaushika Sūtra.
Kaṭh.Up.	Kaṭh (or Kāṭhaka) Upaniṣad.
Mait.Saṃ.	Maitrāyani Saṃhitā.
MBH.	Mahābhārata.
Pañca.Br.	Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa.
R.V.	Rigveda.
Śat.Br.	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
Taitt.Saṃ.	Taittirīya Saṃhitā.
Taitt.Br.	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa.
S.B.E.	Sacred Books of the East.
Vāj.Saṃ.	Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā.

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ROMAN EQUIVALENTS OF NAGARI LETTERS

अ	a	ए	e	क	k	च	c
आ	ā	ऐ	ai	ख	kh	छ	ch
इ	i	ओ	o	ग	g	ज	j
ई	ī	औ	an	घ	gh	झ	jh
उ	u	ऋ	ṛ	ङ	ṅ	ञ	ñ
ऊ	ū						
ट	ṭ	त	t	प	p	य	y
ठ	ṭh	थ	th	फ	ph	र	r
ड	ḍ	द	d	ब	b	ल	l
ढ	ḍh	ध	dh	भ	bh	व	v
ण	ṇ	न	n	म	m	श	ś

ष ṣ Anusvara -- ṃ

स s Visarga : ḥ

ह h

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INTRODUCTION

'In searching the roots of the present day culture one has to go back to prehistoric times!'[1] Man made his first appearance upon the earth very many ages ago and his march from the stage of savagery to civilization was not an unimpaired process. It had to pass through different stages of historical development. Different cultural aspects affected modifications and revision from time to time due to the demand of situation. It was also due to the contact and influence of different people and different cultures.

History of a people does not consist of narration of facts and events. It is not confined to dynastic records, political activities and its chronology. It also intends to trace the social, cultural and economic development of the people through the various stages of civilization. It has to record the lessons learnt in the past and should portray the appreciation of the future. It is the story of the pilgrimage of a group of individuals to an ultimate goal the nature of which is as yet denied to mankind. During the long course of progress, the individual, the group and the community had to face, as a part of their evolutionary process, a long series of fights, fight with nature, fight with animals and fight with other people, either for domination or for self-preservation. The constant and endless process of evolution gives us an idea of never-ending

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1. Zeuner, F.E., Dating the Past, Introduction, P.1.

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adventure of a people through the ages.Therefore,the history of an individual or dynasty is not as important as that of the people.

"The study of village communities has become one of the fundamental methods of discussing the ancient history of institutions."[2] The present thesis intends to trace the history of the Vedic Aryans in a particular context-their rural life. Indian culture,through the ages of its history, has essentially been rural in its character.Even today, village continues to be the unchanging back-bone of indian economic and social life.India of the early historical period retained its rural agricultural character not only in economy but also in its social pattern and ideology and even her cities bore its impress in form,character and content.It is well known that traditions die hard,specially so in India where the rural agricultural pattern of social economy persisted through the centuries despite political upheavals and intimate contacts with the outside world.In India acculturation has been a slow process and it can best be seen in rural life of our country through the ages.Since we witness the earliest important and notable rural life of this land during the Vedic age,which is not only a significant land-mark in Indian culture but also forms the back-bone of the development of rural life in subsequent periods,a thorough investigation of various sources shedding

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2. Encyclopaedia Brittanmica ,Vol.23,P.101.

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light on it is proposed in the present study.The Vedas , particularly the Rigveda,are the earliest written record of not only India,but also among the Indo-European languages. Thus a discussion of the rural life in the Vedic literature will throw light on the earliest rural life of Indian history and would help us to understand better and in its proper perspective the basic rural pattern of early Indian life. An elaborate and comprehensive study of the village during the Vedic age will unfold a fascinating picture of the rural life and will also provide fruitful clues to the understanding of the specific factors which have operated to make India a land of classical agrarian civilization with its complex and diversified features.

How-so-ever civilization may progress,those of us,who are nurtured in the present urban civilization feel curious about the rural life .The Vedas are the earliest works reflecting Indian life in its pristine form.In order to understand the genesis of our ancient institutions it is necessary to unfold the rural life of the Aryans in the Vedic age.A discussion of the rural life as depicted in the Vedas will throw light on a society than which no older one can be traced in India after the Indus Valley civilization.

India is overwhelmingly an agrarian country.More than three-fourth of her population lives in villages and is engaged in agriculture.The vast portion of Indian Society is rural.However the classical Sanskrit literature was born,

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nourished and patronised in royal courts.It is mostly the literature of the elite and it over-whelmingly depicts the urban life of the period.However it would be wrong to say that the entire ancient Indian literature is a bourgeois literature divorced from common life of the rural-folk. It may be particularly noted that the homely smell of the earth permeates Vedic literature which grew out of the Indian soil.In the Rigveda we find traces of hymns designed for such occasions as ploughing,[3] return of cattle from grazing fields,[4] the driving in of cattle and driving out.[5] The comparison of the breasts of Usas with udders of a cow[6] has a typical rustic air.The lowing of the cow,[7] its crying for its calf,[8] its licking the fresh born offspring[9], its yielding milk[10] evinces nothing of urban sophistication. In a rural and pastoral society,in which the cow played an important role, the comparisons pertaingly to rural life came in handy.All this clearly testifies to the rural nature of the Vedic civilization.The Aranyaka texts or the books of

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3. R.V.IV.57.
4. R.V.VI.28.
5. R.V.V.112;X.169.
6. R.V.I.92,4.
7. R.V.I.95,16;II.34,15.
8. R.V.IX.12,2.
9. R.V.IX.100,7;II.35,1 etc.
10. R.V.I.38,8.

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the words suggest that the vast mass of knowledge was the outcome of discussions and deliberations not of towns but of villages, thus pointing to the rural importance of our culture.

'The city and its civilization has always been one thing, while the rest of the nation has been another. Between these two things there has always been a high degree of tension-on the whole a creative tension, though it has sometimes found release in exceedingly ugly moments. Between the urban life in the city and provincial life outside the city there has always been a gulf of mistrust, suspicion and contempt. Yet it is not too far-fetched to say that each was an indispensable antibody for the other's healthy growth."[11] This tension between the rural and the urabn life pattern, to a certain extent, is noticeable in ancient Indian literature also. Gotama holds that there is a perpetual an-adhyaya (non recital of the Vedas) in the city.[12] Apastamba,[13] Vasistha[14] and Manu[15] have also similar injunctions. Apastamba forbids a snataka to enter a city.[16] According to Baudhayana nobody living in the city, with his body covered with the dust of the city and his eyes and mouth filled with it, can attain salvation even if he leads an austere life.[17] In fact, the

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11. Irvin Kristopal, Urban Civilization And Its Discontent., American Review, New Delhi, April 1971, P.53.
12. Gotama-Dharmasutra, XVI.43.
13. Apastamba-Dharmasutra, I.3,9,4.
14. Vasistha Dharmasutra, XIII.1.
15. Manusmriti, IV.107.
16. Apastamba Dharmasutra, I.11,32,21.
17. Baudhyayana Dharmasutra, II.4,8,33. Cf. II.3,53.

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ethos pervading the ancient Indian literature is definitely oriented towards ruralism and indicates the rural bias of ancient Indian civilization.On the other hand later literature is replete with references to the naivete and cnudeness of the rural folk, The word grāmya came to denote'vulgar';the attitude of the city-dwellers towards the rural folk was one of contempt.Kalidasa says that nobody takes a gem to a village for assesment when a city (pattana)is available.[18] He also refers to the guileless looks of a village women interested only in the produce of their fields[19] and contrasts them with the sportive glances of the ladies of the city.[20] This distrust and tension between the rural and the urban population can be critically analysed only if we probe into the genesis of the earliest settlements in ancient India.

The significance of our study lies also in the fact that it deals with a vast country which has had a civilization that goes back to atleast five thousand years from now,and which witnessed the rise and fall of many kingdoms and empires in the course of its long and eventful history.Our study takes us to a literature of considerable antiquity in which the roots of Indian rural institutions may be said to have been laid.To quote Sir Henry Maine,'Indian village communities are as old as the hills.'The existence of the village

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18. Kalidasa's Malavikagnimitra,1.
19. Kalidasa's Megha-duta,I.16.
20. Kalidasa's Megha-duta,1.27.

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community has been traced to the earliest time of which history speaks,and even beyond these when history is lost in the twilight of fable ,it can be easily seen in the mist.Because of their utility and service to the community, the ancient Indian rural institutions were carefully fostered and maintained well-neigh three thousand years.India is a country of enduring survivals and it shows extra-ordinary continuity of culture.This by itself entitles our study to considerable respect at our hands,especially when we compare the longevity and stability of our institutions with those of the great countries of antiquity like Babylonia and Egypt. In the following pages we shall note that some of the basic features of our rural pattern of culture survived the shocks of Time and has been handed down to us almost intact till our own days.For example the rude sort of plough used by our ancient Aryan ancestors,which,uncouth as it is,has not only survived its original inventors,but is still in use in more or less remote parts of our country,owing to the conservatism and stubbornness of peasantry all over the world. The characteristic bullock cart that usedto ply at the dawn of our ancient civilization,still retains the same shape and form.These are only a few examples of long survivals of traditional forms.In this sense our study is marked by a continuity which may be described as a salient feature of ancient Indian rural life of subsequent ages.To quote Sir C.T.Metcalfe the Indian village communities'seems to last where nothing else lasts.Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down;

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revolution succeeds to revolutions: Hindu, Pathan, Mogal, Mahratta, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn: but village community remains the same.... This union of village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independance.[21]

"It may, however, be mentioned in passing, with a heavy sigh and deep regret, that disruption of this very useful institution of village community is fast approaching, and India herself is slowly but surely losing everything that is characteristic of her.... According to Sir W. Wedderburn, 'And the late Sir James Caird regards the disruption of the mutually helpful bond of village society as the most fatal misadventure that can befall the people in their struggle for life.'"[22] Sir Henry Maine observes that, "just as according to the Brahmanical theory each of the Indian sacred rivers loses in time its sanctity, so India itself is gradually losing everything which is characteristic of it." Further, he says that "this remarkable society, pregnant with interest at every point, and for the moment easily open to our observation,

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21. Sir C.T. Metcalfe's Report in the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1832, Vol. III. Appendix, 84. P. 331.
22. N.B. Pavgee, Self-government in India (Vedic and Post Vedic) P. 149, 50.

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is undobtedly passing away."[23] In the light of the above remarks the study of rural life in one of the earliest phases of Indian history becomes all the more important.

Modern scholars like D.D.Kosambi [24] have also referred to relatively changeless character of ancient Indian villages through the ages. He observed that "a village founded in 1500 A.D. looked about the same after a century or two as one first settled over a thousand years earlier. The Indian village appeared "timeless" to foreign observers simply because memory and record of time served no useful purpose in the life of the village."

However, the observations of scholars like Metcalfe and Henry Maine about Indian village communities being unchanging have to be accepted with great reservations. According to Dr.A.S.Altekar it cannot be maintained that there were no changes in the village communities taking place in the Hindu period. The theory therefore that the Indian village communities do not change is completely disproved by the teachings of history.[25] We shall see in the succeeding pages how the influence of the Vedic Sabha dwindled down during the Brahmanic age. This points to the importance of our subject in another direction. Some of the popular beliefs

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23. Henry Maine, Village Communities in the East and West. P.24.
24. D.D.Kosambi, An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History P.243-44.
25. A.S.Altekar, Village Communities in WesternIndia P.124-27.

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and traditions,recorded in the epics,Puranas and classical Sanskrit literature have their root in the Vedas.When the rural life in the epics and other types of Sanskrit literature come to be analysed,we shall be in a position to know to what extent the rural element of the Vedas underwent change or remained intact in later works.The milieu of the later literature was,to a great extent,different,and civilization was much more refined and advance which we call urban.

India is a classical land of agriculture.Its long past history and culture can be properly understood only if a study of its rural life in its various aspects is made . In ancient times there was a kind of socio-economic equilibrium in the rural areas.It was a subsistence ,self-sufficient economy to which everybody belonged.Even the gods and the rural rich were part of the independant,economic and cultural scene.There was inequality but no alienation. The village was a well-knit community with a distinctive life and values shared by all.It was not a market economy and milk was not sold for money;and so whatever was grown and produced in the villages was available for the village folk to consume.Population was in check because of natural calamities and a variety of other reasons. It was a part of the balance of nature,and ecological and environmental harmony was not disturbed.In the long course of our history all this has changed advertently or inadvertently .Dr.A.S. Altekar has observed that "history shows us that both internal and external forces have been working out changes

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in our village communities.The unique agrarian socio-economic structure of India experienced changes in its long history. Village in the Vedic age,as we shall see in the succeeding pages,lived almost an independent,atomistic,self-sufficient social and economic existence.Self-sufficient village economy was based on an equilibrium between village agriculture and the village artisan industry.In its long course of history every aspect of the village,social,economic and cultural,experienced a steady transformation.Still the basic feachers of ancient Indian village community remained unchanged.To correctly appreciate these basic feachers of ancient Indian village life we have to look into the earliest form of rural life as recorded in the Vedas.This will also enable us to analyse the factors responsible for the changes that our rural life of the country has undergone by the process of history.

The present thesis deals with the life of the people in the Vedic age in a particular context, its rural aspect. It has been endeavoured to emphasise the rural bias of the Vedic culture. Since rural life was an earlier phenomena, evidences have been mostly drawn from the earlier Vedic texts."Whereas everything else is but vaguely known,we possess nearly full information about the growth and gradual evolution of the Indian civilization from the well marked stratification of the mass of literature,collectively known as the Vedas.It is also a matter of common knowledge that this civilization is the common basis on which succeeding

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generations of diverse races and localities have built up the imposing structure known as Hindu civilization." Scholars have suggested different dates for various Vedic texts.However it is generally agreed that the earliest phase of the civilization is represented by the Rigveda followed by the Samhitas,the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣadas. While this chronological division may be,broadly speaking, accurate,it may be pointed out that they are some times overlapping ,and it is not possible to draw any rigid line of demarcation between them. It is now generally agreed that some portions of the Atharvaveda are as old as the Rigveda, if not earlier and some of the oldest Upaniṣadas reach back to the Brāhmaṇa period.The dates of the Vedic texts are a matter of great controversy.Since the Vedas are one of the earliest works in India,they may safely be regarded as representing the earliest phase of Indian civilization.On the basis of the materials drawn from the Vedic texts we have attempted a picture of what may be regarded as the dawn of Indian civilization.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the meaning of the word 'Grāma'. While tracing the genesis of the village an humble attempt has been made to trace the social development of the Aryans from the semi-nomadic pastoral stage to settled mode of rural existence.It also deals with the factors responsible for the aggregation of the people in the form of settled villages.Village planning,Grāma-Saṃniveśa,architecture, house building activities,house building rituals have also been described.It also deals with the meaning of the word

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'Pura'in the Vedas. The second chapter deals with the administrative organization of village in the Vedic age . It describes the village as a political unit, evolution of political units in relation to village, village officials- Grāmiṇi, Vrājapati, Purapati, Śatapati, Adhikṛta and Grāmyavādin. The village assemblies have also been dealt in this chapter. The third chapter deals with the social life of the village in the Vedic age. The fourth and the fifth chapters describe economic life and religious beliefs of the people in the Vedic age respectively. The sixth chapter is summary and conclusion. A list of selected reference books has also been added. We have referred to the books which have been used in the preparation of this thesis with profit. Other works and original texts have been referred to in the foot-notes.

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CHAPTER - I

THE VEDIC VILLAGE

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THE VEDIC VILLAGE

The existence of village is beyond all doubt even in the Rigvedic period.The resplendent Agni is invoked as protector of the people in villages.[1] The mighty Rudra is propitiated in another verse in order that all things in the village may be well nourished and exempt from disease.[2]In the Rigveda,we find the Aryans settling down to a pastoral and agricultural village life.In the Vedas[3] the term 'village' is generally denoted by the word'Grama! The Sanskrit word 'Grama'may originally have had reference to a tribal grouping of a limited number of families,as the dictionary gives'clan; 'community; 'host;'aggregate' as among the meanings.[4]In the Vedas the word 'Grama' also occurs with what appears to be the derivative sense of'body of men!.[5]It must have stood intermediate between the Kula or family on the one hand,and the tribe or Vis on the other.This may indicate that Grama was therefore regarded as an aggregation of families. Hopkins seems to hold that in the Rigveda,III.53,12,in reference to the Bharata Jana,Jana means a Grama (horde) as distinguished from a people.[7]He thinks that

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1. R.V. III.33.
2. R.V. VIII.6,2.
3. R.V. I.44,10;114,1; II.12,7;(I.100,10;III.33,11;X.27,1;127,5;A.V. IV.7,5; V.20,3,where the sense village is quite probable);X.146,1;149,4etc.;A.V.IV.36,7.8;V.17,4;VI.40,2, etc.;Vaj.Sam.,III.45;XX.17,etc.
4. Vide Macdonell,Sanskrit Dictionary,s.v.grama.
5. R.V. I.100,10;III.33,11; X.27,1;127,5; A.V. IV.7,5;V.20,3; Sat.Br.IV.1,5,2; IV.7,4,9; XII.4,1,3.
6. Religions of India,26,27.
7. Cf.R.V. X.174,5; A.V.I.29,6.

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in the Rigveda[8] 'Jana' is also sometimes used as a synonym of 'Grama'.[9] In a passage of the Rigveda Janman is mentioned in reference to the different divisions of the tribe.[10] Zimmer[11] remarks that this is 'evidently' (deutlich), a village because the inhabitants of the village were originally of single family or kindered. Zimmer[12] argues from a passage in the Rigveda, II. 26, 3, that a people was divided into cantons (Vis), canton into joint families or clans, or village communities (Grama), and these again into single families. He thinks that the four divisions are reflected in the passage in question by Jana, Vis, Janman and Putrah, or sons, and argues that each village community was originally founded on relationship. According Macdonell and Keith, there is no ground to assume that Jan means a clan or horde (Grama) as distinguished from the people. It is true that the Bhartas are called gavyan gramah, 'a horde eager for booty' in the Rigveda III. 33, 11; but Grama has there merely a general application.[13]

According to Roth,[14] in several passages of the Rigveda,[15] the 'settlement' or 'village', the German 'Mark' is denoted by the word Vrjana. Zimmer also agrees with this view.[16] He holds Vrjana as the 'secure' abode' (ksiti dhurva) where the clan as

8. R.V. III. 33, 11.
9. Religions of India, 27, 28.
10. R.V. II. 26, 3.
11. Zimmer, AL. 160.
12. Ibid., 159, 160.
13. Vedic Index, I. 269.
14. St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v. 2.
15. R.V. I. 51, 15; 73, 2; 91, 21; 105, 19; 128, 7; 165, 15; 166, 14 etc.
16. Zimmer, AL., 142, 159, 161; Cf. Vedic Index II. 320.

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a village community(Grama) lives.[17] 'Ksiti' is in the Rigveda[18] a regular word for 'dwelling', and in particular the 'Ksitir dhurva ;' the secure dwelling', is mentioned[19] in a context that shows it to be equivalent to the Vrajna or Grama regarded as a stronghold.[20] from this sense is developed that of the people occupying the settlements.[21] Zimmer[22] holds that in one passage of the Rigveda 'Bra'[23] denotes the village host which formed part of the Vis, and was composed of relations(sabhandhu)[24].

Sanskrit root 'Vis' means to 'enter' or 'settle'. In many passages of the Rigveda[25] the sense of 'settlement' or 'dwelling' is possible. Mr. N.C. Bandyopadhyaya[26] holds that 'Visah' having originated from the word 'Vis'(to settle) meant the settlement of the Aryans. Thus etymological meaning of the word Vis may indicate that it was also another word for village, that is Grama. But in the Vedas this word is used with tdis-tressing vagueness and has so many significations and no definite conclusion can be drawn in this respect.[27]

The above discussion would indicate that in the beginning in the Vedas the words relating to village have no direct

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17. R.V.I.51,15;73,2(Cf.I.73,4).
18. R.V.I.65,3;III.13,4;V.37,4 etc.
19. R.V.I.73,4;VII.88,7.
20. Vedic Index,I.208.
21. R.V.III.38,1;IV.24,4;38,5;V.1,10 etc.
22. Zimmer,AL.,162.
23. R.V.I.126,5(visya iva vrah).
24. Vedic Index,II.339.
25. R.V.IV.4,3;37,1;V.3,5;VI.21,4;48,8;VII.56,22;61,3;70,3; 104,16;X.91,2,etc.
26. Hindu Polity and Political Theories,52.
27. Vedic Index.II.305,306.

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reference to the grouping or aggregation of land.The connotations regarding the village in the Vedas would indicate that originally it was not a territorial but an essential human unit. It originally signified 'body of men'or relationship based on blood rather than locality .Baden Powell writes that "I do not know one word(for village)that has direct reference tt the grouping or aggregation of land.The Sanskrit Grama may originally have had reference to a tribal grouping of a limited number of families .... "[28]

The Vedic evidence in relation to Grama can lead us to trace the different stages of social development that resulted in the formation of the earliest village settlement in Ancient India.The Rigveda indicates an advance from the hunting and food-gathering stage and some sort of permanent collective dwelling led to the evolution of village.[29]In several passages[30] the Grama occurs with what appears to be the derivative sense of 'body of men'.The Bharatas in one passage are referred to as horde seeking cows.[31]The Satapatha Brahmana,perhaps preserves the memory of samy-permanent stage Aryanvillage pattern of the hunting and food-gathering stage ,which gradually gave way to settled and permanent village pattern under the presure of agricultural economy. Saryata Manava is described in the Satapatha Brahmana to have wandered about with his village.[32]

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28. Baden Powell,The Indian Village Community,74.
29. Amita Ray,Villages,Towns And Seculer Buildings In Ancient, 23.
30. R.V.I.100,10;3.33,11;X.27,1;127,5;A.V.IV.7,5;V.20,3;Sat.Br. IV.1,5,2;IV.7,4,9;XII.4,1,3.
31. R.V.III.33,11.
32. Sat.Br.IV.1,5,2.7.

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This clearly shows that in the beginning the Grama was not a settles unit but a tribal bandled by its chief.Thus in this period Grama is not ordinarily used in the sense of village but in that of small tribal fighting groups,who were mobalised together for purposes of war (Sam-grama).Further,it may be noted that in the ceremony of royal consecration the king performs a mimic cow-raid against a relative of his;or engages in a sham fight with a Rajanya.[33] It may be reminiscent of that nomadic and semi-permanent stage of Aryan life pattern when they moved from one place to another under the leadership of their king in search cow-herd.[34]The ceremony of cow-raids seems to have been originally prescribed as ordeals for establishing the qualifications of the sacrificer for kingship. Primarily this must have meant the ability to capture cows from the enemies,of which we have many instances in the Vedic period,the very term Ga-visti having the secondary meaning of war.But there is no doubt that originally the kingb success in the cow-raids exhibited in him those qualifications which destinguished the early chief in the cattle foreys. It may also be noted here that the cultivation of soil was no doubt known to the Indians before they separated from the Iranians, as is indicated by the identity of the expressions yavam krs and sasya in the Rigveda with yao karesh and hahya in the Avesta,referring to the ploughing in of the seed and to the grain which resulted.[35] But it is not without significance

33. Cf.Taitt.Sam.I.8,15 with commentary; Eggling ,S.B.E.,41, 100,N.1.Also Sat.Br.V.4,3,1-8.
34. Sat. Br.IV.1,5,2.7.
35. Zimmer,AL.,235;Hopkins,Journal of the American Oriental Society,17,85;Vedic Index,I.181.

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that the expressions for ploughing occur mainly in the first[36] and tenth[37] books of the Rigveda and only rarely in the so called family books(II-VII).[38] This may indicate to a stage before the settled agricultural village pattern of the Rayans was evolved.To quote Dr. R.S.Sharma:"The Rigvedic people were a semi-nomadic people more in the pastoral stage,and without the knowledge of iron did not practice effective plough cultivation.Cattle rearing was more important source of livelihood than agriculture,and cattle and bullocks formed their most valued possessions.The influence of cattle-rearing is write large upon their social and military organisation.... Because of their living in the semi-nomadic stage and constantly engaged in fighting for the sake of cows they had to be mobile ".[39] Expressions such as Pritistha-kama ,[40] one desirous of a fixed abode,may also point to the earlier stage of semi-nomadic existence. The nomadic mode of existence may also be presumed by such words in the Vedas as Carsani.It occurs severally in the Rigveda and later literature .Bhatt-Bhaskara has proposed three derivations,the first from the root Cay as given by Yaska ,the second from the root Car to move and the third from the root Krs to cultivate .As regards the first derivation,there is no phonological connections between Carsani and the root Cay.[43] The other two derivations

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36. R.V.I.23,15;176,2.
37. R.V. X.34,13;117,7;X.146,6.Cf.X.101,4.
38. R.V.IV.57,4;IV.57,8.
39. Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India,264.
40. Taitt.Sam.II.1,3,4;Panca.Br.XXIII.18,1,etc.
41. R.V.I.86,5;184,4;III.43,2;IV.7,4;V.23,1;VI.2,2;X.180,3,etc.
42. If derived from Krs,(plough)or 'till'Vedic IndexI.257.
43. S.Varma,The Etymology of Yaska,76.

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proposed by Bhattabhaskar deserve greater attention .The first envisages its derivation from the root Car to move with the suffix ani on the basis of unadi 2.95 in the sense of a 'constant wanderer'.The meaning squarely fits in the context of several places in the Rigveda where 'Carsani'occurs either in collocation with words indicative of movement or alternativelyin contradistinction to Ksiti meaning dweller.In the Rigveda [44]Carsani and Ksiti are said to augment the power of Indra.In another passage[45]the same god is eulogised as having the exclusive control over Carsani and Ksiti .Now Ksiti derived from the root Ksi to dwell means dweller,and ,therefore ,the contradistinction leaves little doubt about the basic meaning of Carsani as a wanderer .Bhattbhaskara's second suggestion is still more interesting which connects Carsani with the root Krsa to cultivate.In many Rigvedic passages Carsani is almost synonymous with Kristi.Similar epithets are applied to them. Purvi-carsani,[46] Panca-Carsani,[46a]Satru-carsani and Manusi-carsani have their parallels in Purvi-Krsti,[46b]Panca-Krsti,[46c] Satru-Krsti and Manusi-krsti. It seems that Carsani and Krsti came to denote agricultural labour. According to Keith and Macdonell Carsani may denote 'men or cultivator' in opposition to nomads.[46d]

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44. R.V.VIII.16,9.
45. R.V.I.7,9.
46. R.V.III.42,2;V.86,2.
46a.R.V.VIII.86,2;VII.15,2;IX.101,9.
46b.R.V.VIII.62,2.
46c.R.V. IV.38,10;X.178,3; A.V. III.24,3,XII.1,42.
46d.Vedic Index,I.257.

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"In fact the Vedic literature preserves very valuable evidence on the early reaches of Indian culture.It is a unique document of the people from the moving to the settled life,incidentally giving information on the settlement pattern also.Maitrayani Samhita mentions to kinds of people-the Yayavariya and the Ksemya.[46e]The Yayavara is a constant wanderer,where as the Ksemya is one who lives in a tent.Though the nomad does not lead a permanent or settled life yet he resides in a tent for a short while and takes rest.So the Yayavariya and Ksemya are actually not two types of the people but are merely two ways of life,as it is indicated by the Maitrayani Samhita.[47]The mobile life is the Yoga (Yoke),where as the restful life is ksema.The word Yoga is derived from the root Yuja.[48]Its primary and pre-eminent meaning is to'harness and animal.' the word Ksema,derived from the root Ksi indicates both movement and settlement.In all the references in the Rigveda, the primary meaning is dwelling or shelter ,which at times is extended to security,place or comfort derived from the undisturbed habitation ".[49]

In the Rigveda III.7,2, Sayana interprets Sadasi Ksemayantarin,in the sense of 'desiring an abode or shelter in the house!Again attention may be drawn to a verse of the Rigveda[50]addressed to Vastospati ,the deity of the house.

46e. Mait.Sam.,III.2,2;History and Archaeology,Vol.I.Nos. 1-2.P.246.
47. Mait.Sam.V.2,1.
48. Tattva-vaisardi of Vacaspati on Yogasutra.
49. S.N.Misra,Early Indian Nomadism and Patterns of Settlement-History and Archaeology,Vol.I.Nos,1-2,P.246.
50. R.V. VII.54,3.

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"O Vastospati ,we may walk along with your Gatumatya (moving) Samsada (abode or place of meeting).You protect our Yoga and Ksema.""Reference to moving abode (Gatumatya Samsada) is interesting in as much as it indicates the nomadic stage and, therefore,Yoga and Ksema may be taken respectively in the sense of yoking or endeavour and shelter.....It is stated that Yoga (Yoke)is Visnu-krama or Visnu's strides and the Ksema (tent) is Vatsapra,the gladdener of the descendents of Vatsa .The Visnu-Krama is constant wandering.Visnu by his three gigantic strides had measured the whole universe .[51] Thus,the mobile aspect of the nomadic life is the Yoke(Yoga) whereas the settled or sedentary life is the restful (Ksema) Further,the Yoke represents Visnu-krama and the restful indicates Vatsapra .These are the two-fold modes of divine creation.Visnu-krama and Vatsapra are complementary to each other.According to a legend mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana Prajapati created the whole universe by the Visnu-Krama and the Vatsapra.[52]... Yoga (Yoke) and Ksema (restful)are the two ways of life of the nomadic and the settled people respectively .... The sacred literature enjoins the performance of the ritual of Vatsapara on those who discarding nomadic wandering would like to lead a settled life.The sacred fire , kept in a cart,is pulled by bulls and is taken around.This is supposed to metamorphose the Divine.Creator into the humen . The cart is driven towards the eastern direction.Before starting,

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51. Taitt.Sam. V.2,1.
52. Sat. Br.,VI.7,4,7.

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a prayer is offered to the sacred fire so that the people may not be injured. After reaching the destination the bulls are unyoked but the fire is not taken out of the cart which is placed in the eastern direction of the site, selected for the settlement. This part of the ritual which involves the driving of the cart is indicative of the Visnu-Krama and the following part which consists in the construction of the Vedi, (altar) indicates Vatsapara. The entire site is sprinkled with water and the Vedi, (altar) is erected in the north. The sacred fire is, then, taken out of the cart and is placed on the altar. The burnt ashes are collected in a bowl prepared out of the leaves and is thrown in water. Thereafter, the whole site is cleared by the branch of the palasa tree. The palasa tree indicates the Brahmana and the clearance is symbolic of the driving away of the earlier settlers of the place. The settlement is planned in a circular fashion. The Vatsapra part of ritual thus marks the cessation of the nomadic and the beginning of the settled life."[53]

"The Vedic literature gives a good deal of information on the various stages of life from the nomadic to the settled. the moving abode, or Kasaya, the pit dwelling or Garta, Pastoral abodes of the Pastya and Vrjan types indicate the intervening stages".[54]

In several passages of the Rigveda the moving abode is

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53. S.N.Misra, Early Indian Nomadism and Patterns of Settlement- History and Archaeology, Vol.1.Nos.1-2, P.248-249.
54. Ibid.

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denoted by the word Ksaya.[55] There are references to Brhat-Ksaya,[56] the moving abodes and the Ratha-Ksaya,[57] the chariot type of moving abode. The Ksaya of the common people is also alluded.[58] The word Ksaya is derived from the root Ksi indicating both movement and settlement. Other Vedic derivations such as Ksema,[59] Ksatra,[60] Ksetra,[61] etc., also point in the same direction. "Thus ksaya seems to be an abode which was mobile and which could be transported from place to place by the marching bands of the nomadic people".[62] Reference to Ratha-Ksaya[63] in the Rigveda indicates that the conveyances were being used as temporary dwellings".[64]

Aryan march from the nomadic stage to settlement is further unfolded by the word 'Garta' in the Rigveda.[65] It may be connected with Indo-Aryan words such as Gaddha (pit), Gaddi, or Garni (Cart) and Gaddi (seator throne).[66] It may be associated

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55. Ksayah, R.V.I.144,7; III.8,1; V.12,6; VI.66,5; VIII.15,9; VIII.63,7; VIII.64,4; 10.64,11; Kasayam, R.V.I.40,7; I.132,3; I.133,7; II.11,14; III.2,6; III.2,13; III.3,2; III.11,7; III.40,4; IV.53,7; V.48,4; VI.2,5; VI.49,15; VII.1,12; VII.59,2; VIII.27,16; VIII.47,4; IX.82,3; IX.97,26; X.47,8; X.63,5; Ksayasya R.V.IV.20,8; V.9,2; VI.71,6; VIII.61,14.
56. R.V.VIII.15,90.
57. R.V.VI.35,1.
58. R.V.IV.20,8.
59. Taitt.Sam.V.2,1; Sat.Br.VI.7,4,10.
60. Buck.Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages, P.1320-21.
61. S.Varma, The Etymologies of Yask, P.63; R.V.I.110,4; IX.91,6; X.33,6; R.V.IV.57,1; Nirukta, 10.14.
62. S.N.Misra, Ibid., P.250.
63. R.V.VI.35,1.
64. S.N.Misra, Ibid., P.249.
65. R.V.V.62,8; V.62,5; V.68,5; VI.20,9; VII.64,4; II.33,11; I.24,7.
66. Mayrhofer, A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary, s.v. garta; S.K.Sastri, A Grammatical Dictionary of Sanskrit s.v. garta.

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with Greek Khortas meaning a farm-yard, Irish Gart ,a field of grain and Welsh ,Garth denoting emclosure or garden. Further it may be connected with old English Crait and English Cart both meaning a cart.[67]

In the Vedic texts Garta also seems to denote a pit.[68] In the Nighantu[69], Astadhyayi[70] and Kasika, the word is taken to denote a house of a human habitation. Another meaning, well corroborated by the Vedic texts is a pillared seat attached to a chariot.[71] The semantics of the word Garta is of "great interest as it furnished us the evidence not otherwise available by indicating how conveyance used by nomadic people eventually became archetype for dwellings when they settled down in permanent abodes. Likewise Vrajan, Pastya etc. Indicate the changes in the settlement patterns."[72] Thus the earliest Aryans in India seem to have advanced from hunting and food-gathering stage. The transition from hunting to domestication of animals and from food-gathering to food-production was indeed, a very big change in the process of civilization, which in-evitably reflected itself in the building up of a community life within a frame-work of a comparative economic society . Obviously ,in those distant days, for one or more reasons, each

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67. S.N.Misra, Ibid., 251.
68. Sat.Br.III.6,1,16; V.2,1,7; Gopatha Br.II.3,11; Asvalayana Gr.Sutra, II.8,4,5; Nirukta, III.5,
69. Nighantu, III.4,3.
70. V.S.Agrawal, India as Known to Panini, 66.
71. Sat. Br.V.4,1,15; Vaj.Sam., X.16; R.V.V.62,8; VI.20,9; V.62,5; Kath.Sam., XV.7.
72. S.N.Misra, Ibid., P.292.

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group were small and isolated from one another.Besides,one must postulate a semi-permanent transitional stage between migrant and temporary stage on the one hand,and settled and permanent stage on the other.[73]

The Aryans of the early hymns of the Rigveda were for the most part pastoral tribes.Pushan was the god of shepherds to whom hymns were addressed.[74]"Give us wide pastures "was their cry.Not only are there innumerable references to grazing but the pastoral habits of the tribe or often described. Horses,kine,sheep and ewes are frequently mentioned.[75] Another hymn refers to the practice of taking out cattle to the pasturage and bringing them back.The stress laid by the poets on the possession of cows is almost pathetic.The name of the sacrificial fee Dakshina is explained as referring originally to a cow placed on the right hand of the singer for reward.[77] The singers delight to compare their songs to Indra with the lowing of cows to their calves. The pastoral character of the early Vedic society is abundantly proved by the numerous references to animals,particularly cows,in the Rigveda. This is natural in a society which was mainly pastoral in its earlier stages .It is not surprising that,when cows constituted the most precious wealth and were used as a media of exchange,

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73. Stuart Piggott,Pre-historic India,Ch.II,22-41.
74. R.V.I.42,1-10.
75. R.V.X.91,14;I.89,14.
76. R.V.X.19,4-6.
77. R.V.X.107.Cf.I.168,7;VI.27,8;VIII.24,29;39,5;X.162,1,etc.; A.V.IV.11,4;V.7,11;IX.7,9;8,22; XIII.1,52;XVIII.4,8,etc.; Taitt.Sam.I.7,3,1;8,1,1;Vaj.Sam.IV.19,23;XIX.30;Taitt.Br. I.7,3,3 et.seq;Sat.Br.I.9,3,1,et.seq.

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these should be frequently referred to.The lowing of the cow, its crying for its calf, its licking the fresh-born off spring , its yeilding milk -these are very often referred to in the Rigveda.Such references in the Rigveda would prove that the Aryans of the early Vedic age followed a rural type of existence which was based upon pastoral economy in its earlier stages.

The cow played a vital role in the economy of the Aryan settlers.[78] Naturally cattle was the most desired object of fight or contest.[79] The Rigveda describes cattle wars (gavisati, gosati) in such vivid detail that one can readily imagine these contests: a group of warriors[80] seeking cattle (gavis, gavisa) riding horses,[81] using chariots ,[82] waving banners,[83] are ready to contend for offspring, cattle, progeny, waters, and fertile lands.[84] The scene of clash is tumultuous. Warriors with bows and arrows[85] keep the adversary at bay; horses are used to stampede the cattle[86] and flaming torches drive the herd

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78. Norman, Brown, "Sanctity", 30 ff.; V.R.R.Dikshitar, A note on Cow Veneration in Ancient India, Vol. of Eastern and Indian Studies (1939) 75-79; Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index, s.v.go.
79. R.V.II,25,4; IV.38,4; VIII.71,5; VI.66,8; V.34,8; VI.35,2; VII.32,16; III.30,21; III.31,21; VIII.75,7; X.156,2; VI.28,4.
80. R.V.II.25,4.
81. S.D.Singh, Ancient Indian Warfare with special reference to Vedic period, (Leiden, 1965) P.58.
82. Cf. R.V. V.63,5.
83. Cf. R.V. IV.13,2.
84. R.V. VI.25,4.
85. R.V. VI. 75,2; X.38,1.
86. R.V. Cf. V.6,7; IV. 38,4.

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together.[87] To assure success inggaining booty, the gods' assistance and protection is implored.[88] The favourite god for such request is Indra.[89] It will not be unreasonable to assume that the description of cattle fights could refer to secular skrimishes. Cattle fighters (gosu yudh)[90] rode out against non-Aryan tribes,[91] hostile strangers[92] and the type of miser (pani) who stinted with regard to the sacrificial offerings.[93] However, on whatever pasture they might go[94] cattle belonging to the Aryans were regarded as Aryan property. Sacrifice secured grazing area for the sacrificer[95]. The old word for war was Gav-isti, desire for cattle, evidently with reference to cattle raids[96]. Gavya is similarly used.[97] In the Rigveda V.34,8, the meaning of go is the "cattle as the prize of war". Again in the Rigveda Vi.35,2, Indra is requested to help his worshippers capture cattle. The general tone of this hymn (VI.35) points to a real request for cattle as the prize of war.[98] The Rigveda III.31,21, refers to pleas to Indra

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87. R.V.VI.6,5;VIII.75,7;X.156,2.
88. R.V.VI.59,7;VI.66,8;VIII.5,26.
89. R.V. I.33,3; II.30,5; III.30,20.21; III.50,3; VI.19,12; VI.26,2; V.33,4; VI.35,2; VII.32,16.
90. R.V. I.112,22;VI.6,5; X.30,10; Cf.VI.26,2, gosu yudhan. also R.V. I.151,1;X.99,4.
91. R.V. III.53,14.
92. R.V. I.121,15;I.33,3.
93. R.V. VIII.75,7.
94. R.V. VIII.4,18.
95. R.V. VI.28,4.
96. R.V. I.91,23; III.47,4; V.63,3; VI.31,3;47,20;59,5;VIII.24, 2; IX.76,2; A.V.IV.24,5.
97. R.V. VII.18,7.
98. Doris Srinivasan- Concept of the Cow in the Rigveda,32; Cf.VI.28,4,in R.V.

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regarding the winning of cows in battle. Rigveda V.38,4, seems to reflect an actual method employed in cattle wars, where horse is used to drive off the herds In Rigveda VIII.75,7, the rsi of this hymn, Virupa, praises Agni so that the god may leave the oppsing can and favour Virupas side. The fight is for cattle. In the above examples, cows certainly are the contested object of a fight. Diris Srinivasan holds that "activity from daily life is occassionally woven, without hesitation, into the hymns" of the Rigveda and the above references to cattle contests may be taken as actual fights in secular skirmishes.[99] Large herds of cattle were well known, as is shown by the Danastutis, or "praise of gifts" in the Rigveda.[100] The importance attached to the possession of cattle is shown[101] by the numerous passages in which the gods are asked to prosper them and by the repeated prayers[102] for wealth of kine. The verbal root gup,[103] to protect was evolved as early as the Rigveda from the denominative go-paya, 'to gaurd cows.' Go-pati, 'lord of cows' is freely used in the Rigveda[104] to denote

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99. Doris Srinevasan-Concept of the Cow in the Rigveda, 32.
100. R.V.VIII.3,37, etc., Cf. Panca.Br.XVII.14,2; Ait.Br.VIII. 21,23; Sat.Br.XIII.5,4,8, et.seq.
101. R.V.I.43,2; 162,22; V.4,11; IX.9,9, etc.; A.V.I.31,4; II.26,4; V.29,2; VI.68,3; VIII.7,11; X.1,17.29; XI.2,9.21; etc.; Taitt.Sam.III.2,3,1; V.5,5,1; VI.5,10,1; Vaj.Sam.III.59.
102. R.V.I.8,3.1; IV.32,17; V.4,11; VIII.89,2, etc.
103. R.V.VII.103,9; A.V. X.9,7.8; XIX.27,9.10; Cf. Macdonell, Vedic Grammar, 358, n.13.
104. R.V.I.101,4; IV.24,1; VI.45,21; VII.18,4, etc. A.V.III.14,6, etc. Cf. Gopa. R.V.I.164,21; II.23,6; III.10,2; V.12,4 etc.; Gopala: Vaj.Sam.XXX.11; Sat.Br.IV.1,5,4; Gopa in the sense of "gaurdian' occurs in the Panca.Br.XXIV.18 in a compound. Gopitha, in the sense of 'protection', occurs in R.V.V.65, 6; X.35,14, etc. Goptr, 'protector' first occurs in A.V.X.10,5, and is thereafter common.

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any lord or master. Will Durant writes that "Aryans were rather immigrants than conquerors. But they broughtwith them strong physiques, a hearty appetite in both solids and liquids, a ready brutality , a skill and courage in war, which soon gave them mastery of northern India .... They wanted land and pasture for their cattle , their word for war said nothing about national honour, but simplymmmk meant "a desire for more cows!"[105]

Davis in his Evolution of War says that pastoral tribes are nomads. There is constant warfare for protecting the herd and resisting aggression. This is present even now among Bahima of Africa, men of Bechuana. In Togoland and Budama of Lake Chand theft of livestock is a common cause belle. However, Davis has erred in his account about India when he holds that cattle played a minor role. As stated above, raid of cattle ranches was a frequent occurmence in the Rigveda. In the Rigveda we find the pecture of a higher civilization than the pastoral stage . Rigvedic evidence clearly points to a settled people, an organized society and a full grown civilization. But, as noted above , it is peculiar that cattle raids so characteristic of the pastoral age still survive. It is just possible that the hymns relating to cattle raids were "acted out in the ritual to commemorate great raids and loot in the days gone by. Such ritual imitated history, which was thus incouraged to repeat itself. The current Maratha ceremonyy of Simollanghana and the symbolic loot of gold (represented by certain leaves) is a modern example; it commemorates the 18th. century custom of

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105. Will Durant, The Story of Civilization, 397.

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annual raids. The rite survives the social form with changed content."[106] The above references in the Vedas may be reminiscence of that semipermanent Aryan village pattern of hunting and food-gathering stage when they roamed about in search of cow-herds. In the Vedas[107] the word 'Kula' denotes 'whome' or house of the family. However, it is very interesting to note that this word 'Kula' standing for 'whome' or 'house of the family' does not occur before the period of Brahmanas. It may be due to nomadic or semi-permanent life pattern of the Aryan people in the earliest stages of their civilization. However, Kulapa or chief of the family is mentioned in the Rigveda[108] as i inferior to and attendant on the Vrajapati in war, the latter being perhaps the leader of the village contingent of the clan.[109] In the Rigveda[110] it is said that 'comrades attend Indra, as the Kulapas the Vrajapati, when he goes about." Zimmer[111] thinks that this refers to the heads of families being subordinate in war to the village headman (Gramini). Vraja alone occurs in one passage of the Atharvaveda,[112] adverbially in the sense of 'in troop.' In several passages the word Grama occurs with what appears to be the derivative sense of 'body of men'.[113] We have already referred that the Bharatas in one

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106. D.D.Kosambi, An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History P.87.
107. Sat.Br.I.1,2,22;II.1,4,4;4,1,14;XI.5,3,11;8,1,3;XIII.4,2, 17;Brih.,I.5,32;Chand.III.13,6,etc.]
108. R.V.X.179,2.
109. Vedic Index.I.71.
110. R.V.X.179,2=A.V.VII.72,2.
111. Zimmer,AL.,171.
112. Whitney's Translation of the Atharvaveda,436.
113. R.V.I.100,10;III.33,11;X.27,1;127,5;A.V.IV.7,5;V.20,3; Sat. Br. IV.1,5,2;IV.7,4,9;XII.4,1,3.

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passage are referred to as a horde seeking cows. In the Satapatha Brahmana Sariyata Manava is described to have wandered about with his village. Zimmer thinks that Vis was a unit of military organization. Zimmer cites a passage[114] which speeks of fighting Visah and describes the host as divided in Visah. Mr. N.C.Bandyopadhayaya accepts Zimmer's view that Vis was a unit of military organization and it is not impossible that owing to the constant enemity of the aborigines, each settlement had to be on its gaurd or to send a quota of soldiers to the tribal host. R.S. Sharma thinks that the Vis was a fighting unit similar to the fighting groups of kinsmen in Homeric Greek and Ancient Germany.[115] Owing to unsettled condition of the country pastoral divisions were apt to have military character.

We have already had a hint of the great importance which attached to the cow as a factor in the life of the early Aryan community. The very fact of the cows predominance in a peoples life is sufficient proof of that people's having reached a settled stage of existence-the pastoral farming, because the cow, unlike the sheep is unfit for a nomadic life and incapable of bearing the hardship of continual change and marching.[116] Cow is the distinctive animal of Aryan life. For, absolutely unfitted by nature for the hardships of a nomadic existence, or for the torrid heat of the open steppe, it needs

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114. R.V.IV.1,5.
115. R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institution in Ancient India, 264.
116. Z.A.Kagozin, Vedic India, 192.

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the protection of forest dlages,the coolness of streams ,the rest and sweetness of meadows exactly suiting the farming stage of culture which immediately follows on the nomadic and precedes or co-exists with the city building stage,since it wants and the care it demands are such as can be supplied only under favourable and settled conditions of life,even though still very primitive."[117] The Aryans must have passed out of the purely nomadic stage to be found established in rural home-steads.They had learnt to cluster these home-steads into villages. Quarrels leading to armed strife mostly arose out of dispute about flocks and herds."At the more primitive era the principal occasion of war-fare was one calculated to tighten the bond of race rather than lossen it ,being self-defence,the constant necessity of gaurding against the raids of innumerable ,lawless hordes of nomads,mostly of non-Aryan stock ,who,mounted on their fleet and indefatigable steppe-ponies,kept continually hovering and circling round the pasture lands and settlements,whose prosperity excited their greed."[117a] The Rigvedic Indians had,thus passed out of the nomadic stage . Pastoral farming required a settled life.They protected their dwellings from beasts .Thus village settlements grew up with increasing cooperation among the people for purposes of cattle-rearing. The nomadic stage is over and the bond of territory or neighvourhood is plainly in evidence.

It is in this context that we have to note that in the Vedas the word Grama(village) seems chiefly to indicate the sort

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117. Z.A.Ragozin,Vedic India,192.
117a.Ibid.,53-54.

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of protected residence site into which cattle could be driven at night or to escape attack[118] as it has been already pointed out in the Rigveda 'Ksitir Dhurva', the secure dwelling, is mentioned[119] in a context that shows it to be equibalent to the Vrajana [120] or Grama regarded as stcong-hold. Thus village or Grama was a settlement containing cattle as well as men.[121] The Grama which was originally a tribal unit also came to signify territory as well. It is in this sense that the word Grama signifying village or village settlement occurs in certain passages of the Rigveda.[122]

In the Rigveda[123] the wordGotra occurs several time. Roth[124] interprets the word as 'cow-stall', while Geldner[125] thinks that it denotes 'herd'. Sir Monoier Williams[126] holds that it denotes protection or shelter for cows, cow pen, cow-shed, stable for cow stable in general, hurdle, enclosure in the Rigveda.[127] The word Gotra as it occurs in the Rigveda[128] has been interpreted variously and in view of the later use of the word to mean that family organization corresponding to the Greek Phratry and Roman Cury, the attempt has not infrequently been to project the later idea into the passages occuring in the Rigveda. The later meaning

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118. Zimmer, AL., 142.
119. R.V.I. 73,4; VII.88,7.
120. R.V.I. 51,15; 73,2; 91,21; 105,19; 128,7; 165,15; 166,14 etc.
121. A.V.IV.22,2; VIII.7,11 etc.
122. R.V.I.44,10; I.114,1; Cf. A.V. IV.22,2.
123. R.V.I.51,3; II.17,1; 23,18; III.39,4; 43.7; VIII.74,50; 10.48, 2; 103,7.
124. St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.
125. Geldner, Vedische Studien, 2, 275, 276.
126. Sir Monier Williams-A.S.Sanskrit English Dictionary, 1974, p.364.
127. R.V.VIII.80,10.
128. R.V.I.51.3; II.17,1; X.103,7. etc.

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may have been a natural development but original meaning was probably 'herd;herd of cattle in particular.[129] Thus the influence of cattle-rearing is writ large upon the total organization of the early Vedic age and the people who lives with their cows under the same cow-shed came to belong to the same Gotra,which did not indicate descent from the same ancestor in the age of the Rigveda.[130] Thus Grama,which was a tribal unit,signified locality also where people settled with their cattle. Reference to pastoral settlement may be seen in the Rigveda[131] where the word 'Gomati' denotes'a place abounding in herds of cattle.'[132] The pastoral settlement were also known to Panini [133] and were called Ghosa. The Amar-Kosa defines Ghosh as a small village(Palli) of cow herds(abhiras).[134] The word Grama clearly signifying a village settlement occurs in certain passages of the Rigveda.[135]

In the above context it would not be incorrect to say that even in the Rigvedic age the nomadic mode of existence of the Aryans seems to have vanished and they had begun a settled life."The multiple contradictions between a pastoral nomadic life,the tradition of fruitful raids upon civilizations ,now vanished,and the necessity of settled agriculture were beginning to develop. "[136] We have already seen how the transition from

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129. P.C.Basu,Indo-Aryan Polity in Rigvedic Period,2-3.
130. R.S.Sharma.Aspects of Political Ideas and Institution in Ancient India,264.
131. R.V.IV.21,4;V.61,19.
132. Sir Monier Williams,A Sanskrit English Dictionary,1974 p.366.
133. VI. 2,65.
134. Ibid.,II.2,20.
135. R.V.I.44,10;I.114,1;Cf.A.V.Iv.22,2.
136. D.D. Kosambi ,And Introduction To The Study Of Indian History, p.83.

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nomadic to settled life is suggested by the word Carsani denoting people as cultivators in opposition to nomads in the Rigveda.[137] Transition from pastoral raider to agrarian food-producing economy may further bed indicated in the explanation of the word'Arya'. According to Sanskrit Grammar ,the word 'Arya' with short 'A'is derived from the root 'Ri',which means movement,to plough.Hence the word 'Arya'literally means "he who ploughs or he who moves."[138] It may be in proud distinction from the semi-nomadic pastoral stage of the Ancients when they had to be mobile.Prof. Max-muller believes that traces of this root are to be found in the names of many Aryan countries ,from Iran or Persia to errin or Ireland,and argues that the word was invented in the primeval home of the Aryans,to indicate their partiality to cultivation ,as distinguished from the nomadic habits of the Turanians ,whose name is supposed to indicate their rapid jurney or the fleetness of their horse. There are remarkable passages in the Rigveda which indicate that new settlers in calling them "Arya" had not altogether for gotten the original significance of the word.One instance will suffice- 'O Ye two Ashwins -you have displayed your glory by teaching the Arya to cultivate with the plough and to so corn and by giving him rains for the production of his food,and by destrying the Dasyu by your thunderbolt.'[139] Thus the very names which the Aryan conquerors of India gave themselves are names which are

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137. R.V.I.66,3;104,4;III.43,2;IV.7,4;V.23,1;VI.2,2;X.180,3 etc.
138. This meaning of the word Arya is found in R.V.I.117,21. Cf. Carsani ,R.V.I.3,7 and Kristi,I.4,6.
139. R.V.I.117,21.

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believed to indicate that useful occupation which distinguishes the civilized man from the nomadic barbarian,viz. cultivation of the soil. The suggestion if further strengthened by the use of the word Arya which also stood for "cultured"in the Rigveda.[140]

Thus the Rigveda indicate and advance from the hunting and food-gathering stage and some short of permanent collective dwelling led to the evolution of village.The village was a group of houses,built near each other for purposes of safety, and was surrounded by some kind of a hedge as a protective barrier against enemies and wild beasts.[141] The Vedic village or Grama was indeed an aggregate of several Kulas or families ;[142] each Kula,lived in detached houses or grihas within a boumdary or enclosure and was presided over by the father or the eldest brother of the family,called Kulapa or Kulapati.[144] The houses held not only families,but also cattle[145] and sheep[146] at night . A great number of similites and metaphors in the hymns of the Vedas show that the Aryans must have lived long with their flocks,and that they stood to them in relation to the closest familiarity.The daughter is the milk-maid (duhitar),[147] the consort of the prince is in even later poems the buffalo-cow

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140. R.V.I.13,8;IV.30,18;III.34,9;
141. R.V. VII.56,6;Cf.I.121,1;166,4;VI.71,4;78,3;X.43,3;73,10.etc.
142. Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana,III.13,4;Sat.Br.I.1,2,22; II.1,4,4;4,1,14; XI.5,3,11;6,1,3;XIII.4,2,17.
144. R.V.X.179,2;Amita Ray,Villages,Towns,And Secular Buildings In Ancient India,24.
145. R.V.VII.56,16;A.V.I.3,4;IX.3,13.
146. R.V.X.106,6;A.V. III.3.
147. R.V. VIII.101,15;X.17,1;40.5;61,5.7;A.V.II.14,2;VI.100, 3;V I.12,1;X.1,25;Sat.Br.I.7,4,1;8,1,8,etc.

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(mahishi),[148] the prince is at times the cow-herd or ther protector of cows (gopa)[149] and assembly of the tribe and the fold which encloses the cows are denoted by the same name (Goshtha).[150] Thus the pastoral character of the early Vedic Aryans is very much in evidence. As already stated the very fact of the cows predominance in the life of the early Vedic Aryansż is a sufficient proof that they had reached a settled stage of existence. It seems that they had already concluded their nomadic life and settled in their new colony.

It is extremely interesting to be able to trace the stages by which nomad cultivation begins to change into permanent allotment of holdings and to the fixation of villages. A great step in the course of human progress was distinguished by the cultivation of cereals, which obviously necessitates the more or less permanent sojurn of the cultivaing community in one place, the prehension and clearing of a definite tract of ground, and some kind of arrangement for tilling and depasturing it. "out of these circumstances grows a village organization embracing independent house-holds and characterized by differences in social status, privileges, and occupations."[151] Thus the villages did not exists "from times immemorial".

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148. Taitt. Sam. I.8,9,1; Kath. Sam. XV.4; Mait. Sam. II.6,5; Taitt. Br. III.9,4,4; Sat. Br. V.3,1,4; VI.5,3,1; VII.5,1,6; XIII.2,6,4; 4,1,8; Panca. Br. IX.1,4. Cf. R.V. V.2,2; 37; 3; A.V. II.36,3.
149. A.V. I.164,21; II.23,6; III.10,2; V.12,4 etc.
150. Ait. Br. III.18,14; Mahidhara on Vaj. Sam. III.21; R.V. I.191,4; VI.28,1; VIII.43,17; A.V. III.14,1.5.6.
151. Jhon B. Phear, The Aryan Village in India and Ceylon, P. XVII.

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The advance of plough using agrarian village economy over tribal India is a great historical achievement by itself.The rise of the village is bound up with the rise of agricultural economy in history. The emergence of village as evidenced in the Vedas signifies that the Aryans had passed from the nomadic mode of collective life to the settled one. This was basically due to improvement of tools of production which made agriculture and hence settled life on a fixed territorial zone possible and necessary. How the Ancients passed from nomadic hunting and food-gathering stage to that based on roving hoe agriculture and thereafter, on settled plough agriculture carried on by means of draft animals,has been one of the most difficult and complex problems in the field of social research .The hostory of plough-cultivation in India is not clear. Discovery of furrow-marks below the harppan levels at Kalibangan indicates that it was practiced by the Pre-Harappans.It can be safely inferred that it was also practiced by the Harappans who came into contact with the Pre-Harappans .Childe thinks that plough cultivation was known to the Harappans.[152] However,according to Kosambi the Indus people did not have plough,but only a toothed harrow[153] for turning the soil. Sharma is also of the view that the Harappans dug the soil themselves without plough.[154] But the plough was definitely known to the Vedic Aryans[155]. This is

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152. V.Gordon Childe,What Happened in History,P.181.
153. D.D.Kosambi An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History p.64.
154. R.S.Sharma,Light on Early Indian Society and economy,
155. R.V.I.117,21;X.34,13;X.106,2;X.101,3;A.V.I.1.25,5;R.V.IV. 57,4;A.V.VI.91,1;R.V.I.176,2;I.123,13;IV.57,8;X.117,7;A.V. III.17,3;R.V.I.25,15;176,2;VIII.20,19;22,6;A.V.VIII.10,24; II.4,5;VIII.2,19;10,24;X.6,12; XII.2,27; Taitt.Sam.VII.1, 11,1etc.; Mait.Sam.I.2,2;III,6,5;Vaj.Sam.IV.10;IX.22;XIII. 19.21etc.;Sat.Br.VII.2,2,7;VIII.6,2,2;Taitt.Br.III.1,2,5;

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in consonance with the diffusion of the plough in the Ancient world by 1000 B.C.[156] With the invention of the plough, the Aryans were able to develop stable agriculture, the basic source of assured food supply. Their nomadic mode of life ceased. They no longer roamed in herds from place to place in search of means of subsistence. They settled on a definite territory and organized villages based on agricultural economy. Agrarian communities with villages as their fixed habitation and agriculture as their main occupation came into existence.

Thus the origin of all society may be found in the fundamental economic and social needs depriving people to some form of permanent union. The union, in the case of the Vedic Aryans was a moving one, as long as their life remained purely nomadic. The nation then was a moving horde. But when the early Aryan people developed some form of agriculture, they found it necessary to setlle down in some fixed places. These holdings which they formed in a more ore less compact village form were thus "a necessity of permanent agricultural establishment, under the Indian conditions of life, both physical and social."[157] This event marked a land-mark in the history of mankind, inaugurating a higher phase of social existence. Agriculture assured the community, for the first time, a relatively stable food supply in contrast to previous stages of social life .... In the agricultural phase the struggle for existence became relatively less acute for man.

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156. Childe, Op.Cit.P.81.
157. Baden Powell, Village Communities of India II.

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Further,at a certain stage of the development of agricultural economy,due to the greater productivity of agricuture a section of the community could be liberated from the neceesity of participating in food production and could therefore concentrate on the secondary industrial or idealogical activity.This gave momentum to the growth of technology,arts ,sciences and philosophy.It also brought about,though slowly,the significant transition in the social organization of humanity,from an organization founded on kinship and clan to that based on territorial ties .... Civilization thus began with the development of agriculture. The village-the first settled form of collective human habitation and the product of the growth of agricultural economy-thus historically gave birth to rural society ."[158]

While tracing the genesis of village settlement as evidenced in the Vedas,it would not be improper to take into account those features of Indian climate and physical conditions which would have directly encouraged the aggregation of gruops of cultivators,even if tribal ties or a strong sense of family life had not already predisposed them to settle together. No single family can settle alone. A fair-sized clearing of the jungle clad territory should be made not only for the sake of agriculture but also for health. The need of cooperation for defence against wild animals injurious to crops and even to human life,for carrying out cottage building,tank digging ,forest-clearing,

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158. A.R.Desai,Rural Sociology in India,p.18-19.

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and other initial works, obvious.[159]

In the Vedas village is regularly constrasted with the forest (aranya),[160] and its animals[161] and plants[162] with those that lived or grew wild in the woods villages were regarded as seats of quiet, orderd, harmonious life and were constrasted as such with forest with all their wild vegetable and animal life.[163] Vana in the Rigveda[164] and xxx later[165] denotes the 'forest', not necessarily of trees only, but, like Aranya, the wild uninhabited land[166] opposed to 'Dama', 'home'. Dirgharanya, 'wide tract of forest' in the Aitareya Brahmana[167] and Satapatha Brahmana[168] refers to the extensive jungles which must clearly then have covered northern India.[169] For villages settlements dense jungle had to be cleared. Jungles had to be cleared to provide room for expansion which was evidently an imperative to meet the requirements of a population which could no longer accomodate itself in its home land, perhaps owing to an increase and political and economic reasons. The primary need was the breaking of new grounds. Definite reference to clearing of forests[170] suggests that this was

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159. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community, 66.
160. R.V.I.163,11; A.V.XII.1,56; Vaj.Sam.III.45; XX.17.
161. R.V.X.90,8; A.V.II.34,4; III.10,6; 31,3; Taitt.Sam., VII.2,2,1; Kath.Sam., VII.7; XIII.1; Vaj.Sam.IX.32; Panca.Br.XVI.1,9; Sat.Br.III.8,4,16; etc.
162. Taitt.Sam., V.2,5,5; VII.3,4,1, etc.
163. A.V.II.34,4; Taitt.Sam.V.2,5,5.
164. R.V.I.64,1; 65,5; III.51,5; V.41,11, etc.
165. Kausika Sutra, Lxxvi.3, etc.166.
166. xxx R.V.VII.1,19.
167. Ait.V.R.III.44; VI.23.
168. Sat.Br.XIII.3,7,10.
169. Vedic Index.I.369-370.
170. R.V.X.23; Ait.Br.III.44; VI.23; Sat.Br.XIII.3,7,10.

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done for purpose of agriculture.[171] The early Vedic Aryans seem to have adopted a quick and less toilsome method of getting rid of jungles,namely by burning it.The Aryans,as they advanced eastwards,burnt over the forest along the Himalayan foothills. The deforested land dried up ... they settled to the east,by the same method of land-clearing.This method is confirmed by the various adjective-s for Agni in the Rigveda : The swallower of forests,the axe, he who leaves a black furrow[172]. For Agni,Pathi-krt,'path-maker'is not a rare epithet in the Rigveda[173]and later .[174] The frequency with which the epithet is applied to Agni[175]suggests that there is here an allusion to fire burning the primaeval forest and rendering advance possible.[176]Forest fire ,Dava ,is also mentioned in the Atharva-veda[177]and the Satpatha Brahman.[178] According to Sieg,a hymn of the Rigveda[179]describes a forest fire. The Aryans cleared jungles to build villages and for purpose of cultivation .The Rigveda describes Agni as the clearer of jungles and preparer of the way for new settlements.[180]With the assistance of Agni the Aryans burnt the jungles,drove away the hostile Dasyus and made the ground suitable for permanent settlement.Agni by burning the weeds and bushes prepared the ground for cultivation.[181]

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171. Amita ray,Villages,Towns,And Secular Buildings In Ancient India.24.
172. D.D.Kosambi,An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History, p.116.
173. R.V.II.36,2;VII,12;IX.106,5;X.14,15;III.3.etc.
174. A.V.XVIII.2,53;3,25,etc.
175. Taitt.Sam.,II.2,1,1;Sat.Br.;XI.1,6,5;XII.4,4,1;Kausitaki Br.,IV.3,etc.
176. Vedic Index,I.490.
177. A.V.VII.45,2.
178. Sat. Br.XI.2,7,32.
179. R.V.X.142.
180. R.V.I.58,4;VIII.60,12.
181. R.V.II.4,7.

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The following passage of the Satpatha Brahmana[182] may be taken to indicate the Aryan method of land-clearing:

"Mathva, the Videgha ,was at that time on the (river) Sarasvati. He (the sacred fire, Agni)thence went burning along this earth towards the east;and Gotama Rahugana (the priest) and Videgha Mathava (the king) followed after him as he was burning along.He burnt over (dried up) all these rivers . Now that (river)which is called Sadanira ('always with water') flows from the northern (Himalaya)mountain :that one he did not burn over .That one the brahmins did not cross in former times ,thinking,'it has not been burnt over by Agni Vaisvamara.' Nowadays,however ,there are many brahmins to the east of it . At that time it (the land east of the Sadanira)was very uncultivated,very marshy ,because it had not been tasted by Agni Vaisvanara. Nowadays ,however ,it is very cultivated,for the brahmins have caused (Agni)to taste it through sacrifices. Even in late summer that (river) as it were,rages along :so cold is it not having been burnt over by Agni Vaisvanara, Mathava the Videgha ,then said (to Agni),'Where am I to abide?" 'To the east of this (river)be thy abode,'said he.Even now this (river)forms the boundary of the Kosalas and Videhas;for these are the Mathavas (or descendants of Mathava)"The Mahabharata also describes land-burning in the grand Aryan manner.[183]

Defence against enemies is another reason for aggregation of cultivators in form of village settlements.The Ancients must have organized themselves for mutual defence against all kinds

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182. Sat.Br.,1.4,1,14-17.
183. Mbh.1.214-225 Khandavadaha-Parva.

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of hostile forces. Men would badly need protection against the lions and tigers and wolves of the jungle,as well as the fierce and hostile tribes which surrounded them.In the Atarbaveda we find prayer for protection against wild beasts.[184] The Vedic hymns abound in description of clashes among the Aryans and non-Aryans who have been described as Dasas , Dasyus or Anasah.[185]. Dasyu corresponds with the Iranian danhu,dagyu,which denotes a 'province'.[186] Zimmer[187] thinks that the original meaning was 'enemy',whence the Iranians developed the sense of 'hostile country','conquered country','province! The word may have originally meant'ravaged land 'as a result of invasion.[188]"In unsettled times ,cultivation is hardly possible except within reach of some chief's fortress or other place of refuge: and in those provinces where the open level country has allowed of 'village'settlements,the families keep together for mutual help. Each group has to be prepared to defend itself against sudden attack. Accordingly,in many parts of India the village dwelling place has been built with mud walls and stoute gates,within which the cattle may be secured and the cultivators find refuge against a foray."[189] As already noted in the Vedas the word Grama (village)seems chiefly to indicate the sort of protected residence site into which cattle could be driven at night or to escape attack.

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184. A.V.IV.3,1.2.3.4.
185. R.V.I.27,3;I.29,7;II.20,7,etc.;A.V.VIII.8,1-7.
186. Vedic Index I.348.
187. Ab.,110 et.seq.So Macdonell Vedic Mythology,p.158.
188. Vedic Index,I.349.
189. Baden Powell,The Indian Village Community,p.67.

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The problem of water-supply is fundamental in the economics of predominantly agricultural country like India. Even from the early Vedic age, it has been realized that the natural supply of water in the form of rains is the most important economic event of the year.[190] The early Vedic Aryans knew fully well the treachery of the rians and consequently did not merely depend upon the mercy of the heavens but resorted to artificial methods of re-inforcing the operation of natural agencies. Artificial means of irrigation can beinferred from references to Khanitrima,[191] Kulya,[192] Kuppa,[193] Vartra,[194] Setu[195] and the like.[196] The point here is that artificial means of irrigation must have invited some sort of aggregation of cultivators resulting in the foundation of village settlements. "Village lands require irrigation of various kinds: this is obviously opposed to easily shifted cultivation: it also requires fixed fields and a determination of shares in the water. We shall afterwards notice that among the earliest allusions to agriculture in the Vedas we find the water-course

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190. R.V. VII.102,2; V.8,10; I.19,7, etc.
191. R.V.VII.49,2; A.V.I.6,4; XIX.2,2. Cf. Zimmer, AL., 236; Muir Sanskrit Texts, 5,466.
192. R.V.III.45,3; I.43,7; Muir, Sanskrit, Texts, 5,465,466.
193. R.V.I.105,17; A.V.V.31,8; Sat.Br. III.5,4,1; IV.4,3,3; VI.3,3,26 etc., Jaiminiya Br.I.184, etc.
194. A.V.I.3,7,
195. R.V.IX.41,2; Taitt.Sam.III.2,2,1; VI.1,4,9; 5,3,3; VII.5,8,5; Kath.Sam.XVIII.4, Ait.Br.III.35; Taitt.Br. II.4,2,8; Sat.Br. XIII.2,10,1; Brih.IV.4,24; Chand.VIII.4,4,1.2, etc. Max-Muller, S.B.E., I.130, n.2.
196. R.V.IV.19,2; III.33,6; I.52,7; I.116,9; I.116,22; IV.50,3; X.101, 5-7, etc.

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mentioned,and also the field measured with a reed and separated by a balk or lince from the neighbouring fields.[197]

The The agricultural operations require cooperation from others. Some sort of permanent collective dwelling for purposes of cooperation in agricultural operations must have been an important factor in the evolution of village , With the transition from a pastoral nomadic life to agricultural pursuits acquisition of land seems to have assumed a special significance. The Yajurveda deals with regular settlements rather than concuest of land.but in the Rigveda use of such terms as Kshetrasa[198] which means gaining land and Kshetrajesha[199] or acquisition of land suggests that land was considered as the main source of wealth. In the Vedas,these and other such expressions as Kshetrajaya[200] or conquiering land and Kshetrasyapati[201] or lord of land suggest that notions regarding some sort of ownership with regard to land had already developed. We have already seen that'Grama' which originally denoted 'a body of men'in the Vedas settled in a certain locality as an assemblage of cultivators primarily for the purposes of agriculture.So one of the most important question for our consideration in the present context would be that what kind of connection was there between the persons and the land of a village ?This will enable us to point out

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197. Baden Powell,The Indian Village Community,p.31.
198. R.V.IV.38,1;VII.19,3;I.112,22.Also Urvarasa-IV.38,1; VI.20,1;Urvara-Jit,II.21,1;Cf.IV.12,3.
199. R.V.I.33,15.
200. Mait.Sam.,II.2,11;Cf.IV.12,3;Taitt.Sam.,III.2,8,5;Kath. Sam.V.2.
201. R.V.IV.37,1.2;VII.35,10;X.66,13;A.V.II.8,5.

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the genesis of village as evidenced from the Vedas in another direction. Vedic literature tells us very little about the social economy of the village. What little evidence there is has led the scholars into three catagaries, according to whether they emphasise the claim of the community, the king or the peasants as the owner of the soil.

In the earliest stages of history family can be regarded as the earliest form of social association. Family may have been the lowest tribal unit, but it was not a well rooted institution and certainly not a small monogamous unit as we understand it today. As we have already seen, the word Kula, family is not mentioned in the Rigveda in-dependantly. It however forms part of the term Kulapa head of the family which occurs only once in the Rigveda.[202] But even Kulapa is represented as a fighter, inferior to and attendant of the Vrajpati in war, latter being perhaps the leader of the village contingent of the clan.[203] The foundation of social life was the patriarchal family. The joint family system was the universal rule among the Aryans. Joint family is based on the concept of family-ownership of property. In the nomadic or semi-permanent stage, to which we have already alluded, any real approach in the ownership of property or goods was not possible. The land was available in abundance and they could appropriate as they liked. There is no ownership of goods as long as there is an abundance of these and all of them owe their existence to nature. Everyone

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202. R.V.X.179,2.
203. Vedix Index I.171.

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can make himself merry with whatever portion he or she chooses. But as soon as human skill or human valour enters into the situation, the idea of property arises. What we therefore notice in the earliest records is that the horde as it moves on either takes possession of unoccupied land or regularly expels or enslaves the original occupants and conquers it this established propietary right among the early Aryans. In the Vedic literature we have repeated references to the conquest of fields, cattle and other booty. There are two types of property-the movable and immovable . Movable property tends to be liquid very early: and in one way or another tends to pass from man to man, family to family, tribe to tribe. "Riches come now to one, now to another, and like the wheels of car are ever rolling "[204] But there is immobility with regard to land and the association and attachement of the early Aryans to land was a very great factor in the establishment of a settled mode of existence .

The joint family system is very clearly evidenced in several hymns of the Rigveda. The Wedding hymn[205] indicates that the newly married wife rules over (or wins by her love?) her brother-in-law and even over her husband's parents although she herself entertaince a feeling of respect for them .This is a clear evidence of joint family system. The joint family must have been fairly big. This is proved by the numerous relations which are mentioned within the family folds such as Jnati[206]

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204. R.V.X.107,2.
205. R.V.X.35; A.V.III.30.
206. R.V.VII.55,5; I.66,4; 85,28; 117,9; A.V.XII.5,44; Taitt. Br., I.6,3,2; Sat.Br., I.6,4,3; II.2,2,20; 5,2,20; XI.3,3,7, etc.

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Jami,[207] Sajata,[208] Sabandhu,[209] etc. The joint family or the family"joint in food,worship and estate "consists of a body of kinsmen-the ancestor and the descendants upto the third degree who dwell under the same roof,hold common meals ,offer common worship,and own and enjoy property as common.It is a small communistic society ,where the ideal of every man or women according to his or her needs ,prevails to some extent.It is a single cultural unit sharing a common plateform in joys and sorrows,in prosperity and adversity ,in economic pursuits, in social life and in religious exercises.It binds together in one thread three or four generations of men together . The elder member exercises the right of management as the representative of the family and administers the property as its accredited agent,for the common good of the family.He enjoyed the right and undertook duties,but the rights and duties were in the contemplation of his fello citizens and in eyes of law quite as much those of the collective body of his own."[210] The family like corporations ,are perpetual and in -extinguishable .The individual had no right over any share of property,but they had a general right shared by other members

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207. R.V.I.31,10;75,3.4;100,11;124,6;I.65,7;X.10,10;I.123,5; 185,5;III.1,11;IX.65,1;88 ,4,etc.;A.V.I.17,1;Ait.Br.III. 37;R.V.I.105.9;166,13;X.55,4;64,13.

208. R.V.I.109,1;A.V.I.9,3;19,3;II.6,4;III.6,3;VI.5,2;73,1; XI.1,6.7;Taitt.Sam.II.1,3,2;2,1,2;6,9,7;Mait.Sam.,II.1, 18;Kath.Sam.XI.12,13;XII.1; Vaj.Sam.,V.23;X.29;XVII.5; Cf.Taitt.Br.,III.7,12,2.

209. R.V.III.1,10;V.47,5;VIII.20,21 etc.;A.V.VI.15,2;VIII.2,26; XV.8,2.3.etc.

210. Maine, Ancient Law.

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over the whole family property. The joint family is also favourable to the ideal of agricultural production as well as other rural home industries.The whole family was tied to the land, and its coporate interest secured in its cultivation and improvement.

In the Rigveda[211] where be find the rudiments of the Sunahsepa story ,a kind of absolute control by parents over children is suggested. The case of the sale of Sunahsepa in the Aitareya Brahamana [212] suggests that son was under the absolute control of the father.This is further suggested by the case of Rigrasva who was deprived of his sight as a punishment by his father.[213] Again the Rigveda[214] tells us how the insolvent gambler is disowned by his parents and brothers,infront of his creditor. The developed patria-potestas of the father is consistent with the view that there was communal ownership of land in the early Vedic age. This view is supported by Dr. Schrader .He thus summerises the results of his investigations:"The Indo-European family is best conceived as resembling the Roman Familia i.p.,, as consisting of the women,children and slaves under the potestas of a single housemaster.... The agnatic exclusiveness of the Indo-European family,as regards those outside it,and the despotic power exercised within its limits by the man over his wives and children has already been described.... Such house-community consists of a body of sixty or seventy members,who are blood relation to the second or third degree of-course only on

211. R.V.I.24,12-15;V.2,7.
212. Ait. Br. ,VII.12-18.
213. R.V.I.116,6.
214. R.V.X.34,4.

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the male side.At their head is a house administrator who is indeed paid the greatest respect,but who is not to be regarded as the master and owner of the family property,like the Roman pater familias , The family property is rather the joint property of all the adult male members of the house hold.... Meals are taken in common. The men eat first,then women consume what is left.... When the house-father died,all his right went to the eldest son,especially were the women of the family,the mother and the sisters,under his guardianship.This seems to have been ancient Indo-Germanic system."[215]

From the hymns of the Rigveda it is to be inferred that family lived together with undivided shares in land.Cultivation would be carried on a vide scale.Later on products would be distributed according to each share.[216]It may further be noted that the rules about inheritance of landed property do not occur before the Sutras.[217]It is important to note that in the enumeration of gifts in the Danastutis only articles of personal property such as kine,horses,buffaloes ,or camels,ornaments etc. are included but not land.[218]As pointed out by A.N.Base, the essential attribute associated with ownership is the right of transfer by sale,gift and mortgage."[219]Rigvedic evidence clearly shows that land could not be given away so easily as other property.[220]There is not reference to a gift of land in the Rigveda.Daya occurs in the Rigveda only in the sense of

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215. Shrader,Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan peoples. p.393-5.
216. R.V.IV.57,8.
217. Cf.Gautama Dharma Sutra XVIII.5,et.seq.;Baudhayan Dharma Sutra,II.2,3;Apastamba Dharma Sutra,II.6,4.
218. R.V.I.126,1-4;V.30,12-15;VIII.1,32.33;3,21,et.seq.;Sat. Br.IV.3,4.7.
219. A.N.Bose,Social and Rural Economy of Northern India,Vol.I p.38-39
220. R.V.X.107,7.

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reward.[221] The agriculture requires rules against land alienation. The Obvious reason is that the solidarity of both of the family and the community bound by natural and tribal ties to the soil is essential to agriculture. A will or bequest , a sale of land to an outsider is opposed by the agricultural community in the interest of self -preservation. Even in the later Vedic age the sentiment of the Aryans in this regard remains the same. Although the Satapatha Brahman[222] refers to the giving of land as a fee to the priests, but with reproof: land was no doubt even in that period a very special kind of property, not lightly to be given away or parted with. The Earth itself, according to Satapatha Brahmana, said -"No mortal must give me away "[223] We read of property in the Vedic literature; but there is no allusion to the division of land for purposes of partition. The land was regarded as inalienable without the consent of the clansmen.[224] It may further be noted that the Taittiriya Samhita[225] refers to the famous episode of Manu's division of property, from which Nabhanedistha was excluded. This exclusion is made good, by the sons obtaining cattle. This is a significant indication that the property he divided was movable property rather than land (Uravara) at first land was not divided. From the Vedic evidences it is quite clear that title, not land, was the real foundation of wealth. Cattle could be, and were, used i individually. But land was not open to a man's free disposal,

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221. R.V.X.114,10.
222. Sat.Br., XIII.6,2,18; 7,1,13.15.
223. Ibid., XIII.7,15.
224. Sat.Br.VII.1,1,4.
225. Taitt.Sam., III.1,9,4.

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no doubt at any rate,the consent of the family or the community might be required.When we find in the Satapatha Brahmana[226]that Ksatriya cannot grant a settlement without the consent of a clan (Vis),it evidently shows the land under joint ownership.[227]"The old tradition expressed in the Brahmanas ...May have survived in the villages as a communal anti-alienating feeling concerning any disintegration of the basis of their social and economic unity."[228]Further it is said that the vedic evidence indicate that in his old age sons might divide their fathers property,[229]or he may divide it amongst them.[230]Hopkins[231]thinks that the son had an indefeasible right to prevent the father from alienating the hereditary land, which could only be parted with the consemt of the village if it were a case of joint ownership. The recognition of the right of the son has been taken as a sign of joint or family ownership. According to Hopkins communal ownership may be defined as "the ownership of land,in which the villagers have got no notion of a divided or undivided right,all corporate in tilling,in cultivating and improving the village feilds, raising the crops and storing it at a common granary from which each is to take according to his needs and none has any share in the village,which he can call his own."[232]

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226. Sat. Br.VIII.1,8;1.7,3,4.
227. N.N.Kher,Agrarian and Fiscal Economy in the Mauryan and Post Mauryan Age,p.43.
228. A.N.Bose ,Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, Vol.I.p.84.
229. R.V.I.70,10; Ait.Br.V.14;Jaiminiya Brahmana,III.156.
230. Taitt.Sam.,III.1,9,4-6.
231. Hopkins,India,Old and New,218,et.seq.
232. Ibid.,P.229.

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Thus it is argued that the important feature is that there is some kind of'holding in common' of the village area, either still surviving at the present day,or which existed in former times.The village is further supposed to consist of the group of connected families which probably once acknowledged blood-relationship,but now,having lost the recollection of it is only held together by the land occupied in common. Sir Henry Maine,in his work Early History of Institution,holds the village group to belong to a stage when kinship is largely forgotten andwhen the land(always supposed to be held in common) is the chief bond of union.[233] It has been further argued that in all the countries of the west ownership of land'in common' was a recognized feature in a certain (archaic) stage of social progress and it might afford an a priori reason,inclining us to believe that Indian evidence must support a similar conclusion. According to Sir Henry Maine the 'Teutonic families exercised a common proprietorship over a definite tract of land,its Mark, cultivating its domain on a common system and sustaining itself by produce'[234]"The Village community of India exhibits resemblances to the Teutonic Township which are much too strong and numerous to be accidental;where it differs from the Township, the difference may be at least plausibly explained."It has the same double aspect of a group of families united by the assumption on common kinship,and of a company of persons exercising joint ownership of land."[235]Further he holds that

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233. Maine,Early History of Institution(Sec.III)
234. Maine,Village Communities in East & West,P.10.
235. Ibid.,p.11.

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"the patriarchal Family,when occupied with those agricultural pursuits which are the exclusive employment of many millions of men in India,is generally found as the unit of a larger natural group,the Village Community."[236] Again ,he writs, "It does not appear to me a hazardous proposition that the Indian and Ancient European system of enjoyment and tillage by men grouped in village communities are in all essentials particulars identical."[237] Sir Henry Maine in his work Early History of Institutions Traces the village group to some form of expansion of the single family,in which the sense of common descent is gradually lost and the 'assemblage of cultivators is held together solely by the land which they till in common.' Thus village is regarded as a body of men held together by the land that they occupy.[238] In short,the joint family begins the process: and this expands,first into the larger family -such as the house communion-and finally into the village group.The communal ownership of land and the joint family system among the early Vedic Aryans is,thus ,said to be a survival of the primitive Indo-Aryan village system.To quote John B.phear, "On inquiring into the growth in India of proprietary rights in land,we find the joint family at its very origine.The village was at first,and still is in a large degree,a group of such families,often all sprung from or appendant to a central family."[239] He further remarks that "we shall hardly be wrong

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236. Maine,Village Communities in East and West,P.18.
237. Ibid. P.103.
238. Maine, Early History Of Institution,P.77-82.
239. John B.Phear,The Aryan Village in India and Ceylon,P.234.

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if we assume that the process which we see in operation now - a-days does not differ essentially from that which gave rise to the village in archaic times.I eimagine one or two enterprising persons more or less connected together by ties of relationship,started the little colony.Of these,doubtless one would,in some special manner,be leader,and would together with his family after him maintain a pre-eminence in the new society.Next would come the family of the man who was espacially learned in,or who became charged with the care of , religious matters-precepts and ceremonies-in other words,who was the repositary of the higher law of the small community. Very soon other persons would be allowed to cultivate land, and to have place within the ambit of the new settlement upon terms prescribed to them."[240] "Land was not conceived of as the subject of property in mordern sense ,or as belonging to any individual... and the entire space within these belonged to whole village.... So much land within the village boundaries as was needed for cultivation was apportioned among the recognized families.... The grazing ground,the waste,and the good land (or jungle) was common to all alike....In the early days of village cultivation, the agricultural element was comparatively small,and it was both easy and advantageous that the culturable plots should be changed... at more or less frequent periods. As,however,larger areas came to be taken into cultivation,and increased skill and labour to be applied to the reclaimation and culture of the soil,and non-annual crops to be grown,it followed naturally that the

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240. John B.Phear,the Aryan Village in India and Ceylon,P.234-235.

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different families ultimately got to retain permanently in their hand either the whole or the better portion of their respective allotments."[241]"But still the proprietary conception went no further than this,namely,that the particular plot of land which the family or individual claimed was that part of the village land which he or it was entitled to cultivate or to have cultivated for his own benifit."[242]"The village community stood out with great distinctness as a self-governing agricultural corporation."[243]

However macdonell and Keith do not agree with this view.[244] Baden powell,whose various works[245] have done most to combat the view of the village community as a land-holding institution, is prepared to recognized the family as a land holding unit , considering that the patria -potestas is a later growth,and not Indian.[246]It may be noted that Hopkins[247] adopts a theory which allows of individual and joint family ownership side by side, the latter being apparently the earlier but the dacadent stage . He expressly considers[248] that the son had an indefeasibal right to prevent the father from alienating the hereditary land,which could only be parted with by the consent of the village if it were a case of joint ownership.But it must be remembered that , as is very clearly shown in the case of English Law by Pollock

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241. John B.Phear,The Aryan Village In India and Ceylon.P.237.
242. Ibid.P.240.
243. Ibid.P.253.
244. Vedic Index,528-29.
245. Indian Village Community,1896;Village Communities in India 1899,etc.
246. Village Communities in India,128et.seq.
247. India,Old and New,218 et.seq.
248. Ibid.,222.

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and Maitland,249 the recognition of the rights of sons may well be,not a sign of joint or family ownership,but a development from the existence of intestate succession,as is in England, so in India,there is no trace of a corporate joint family in the early books.[250]

In the present context we have also to take into our consideration the theory of individual ownership of land which has been advocated among others by Baden Powell,[251] K.P. Jayaswal[252] and P.N.Banerji.[253] We have some evidence which points to the existence of private ownership of cultivated land even in the Vedic period. Competentauthorities like Schrader,[254] Macdonell and Keith [255] admit that the idea of individual ownership was recognized as early as the Vedic age.[256] First,we have references to measurement of fields[257] which implies the existence of private property.This shows that the principle of appropriation was not unknown at that early age. The fields are mentioned as separated by strips(Khilya).[258] Vedic epithets such as Kshetrasa,[259] gaining land,Urvarasa,[260] procuring or

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249. History of English Law,2,337-352.
250. Vedic Index I.529,n.35.
251. The Indian Village Community,p.p.2 f,36 f f,98-139.
252. Hindu Polity,p p 343 f f.253 Public Admini
253. Public Administration in Ancient India,p.179.
254. Prehistoric Antiquities, P.289.
255. Vedic Index,I.210 f.
256. Bandyopadhyaya, Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India, P.P.114 f Cf.U.N. Ghoshal,Hindu Public Life PartI p.60.
257. R.V.I.110,5.
258. Vedic Index,I.100.
259. R.V.IV.38,1.Cf.VII.19,3;I.112,22.
260. R.V. IV.38,1;VI.20,1.

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granting fertile land, Urvarajit,[261] acquiring fertile soil, Kshetrapati,[262] owner of a field, also point to individual ownership of land.[263] This conclusion is supported by the reference of Apala in the Rigveda.[264] The lady prays for growth of hair on her father's head and of corn produce on her field. The reference to her father's field is put on the same level as his hair of head as a personal possession.[265] Prayers for fertile fields and for worthy children in the same strain also indicates private proprietorship. The gambler is also asked to cultivate his field which also suggests a similar conclusion.[266] The conquest of fields (Ksetrani sam-ji) is often referred to in the Samhitas.[267] Individual property in land seems also presumed later on. In the Chandogya Upanisad[268] the things given as examples of wealth include fields and houses (syatanam). In the Atharvaveda,[269] the Taittiriya Samhita[270] and the Chandogya - Upanisad,[271] the sense of separate and individual fields is more clear. The Authors of Vedic Index Keith and Macdonell hold that 'there is no trace in Vedic literature of communal property in sense of ownership by a community of any sort, nor is there

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261. R.V.II.21,1.
262. R.V.IV.37,1.2;VII.35,10;X.66,13;A.V.II.8,5.
263. Vedic Index,I.99.
264. R.V. VIII.91,5.
265. Vedic Index.I.99;R.V.IV.41,6.
266. R.V.X.34,13.
267. Taitt.Sam.,III.2,8,5;Kath.Sam.,V.2;Mait.Sam.,IV.12,3; Vedic Index,I.100.
268. Chand.VII.24,2.
269. A.V.IV.18,6;V.21,4;X.1,18;XI.1,22.
270. Taitt.Sam.,II.2,1,2.
271. Chand.,VIII.42,2.

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mention of communal cultivation,[272] Dr. A.Smith[273] and, following him J.N.Samaddar[274] express the view that the soil was the propertt of the king. Others who support this theory are B.Breloer,[275] Shamshastry,[276] Hopkins[277] and Buhler.[277a] There is a Vedic utterance that king can claim tribute (Bali) from his people.[278] Elsewhere is a prayer at a coronation oath to grant the king a share in the villages, horses and cattle[279]. The expression 'desirous of village' (Grama-Kama), which occurs frequently in the later Samhitas[280] may indicate the practice of king's granting to his favourites his royal prerogatives over villages so far as fiscal matters were concerned. Further, the king in the Aitareya Brahmana is described as devouring the people.[281] Evidently, therefore the peasents right over his land was precarious, plainly subject to king's will. The germ of the state ownership of lands lies in a different sphere- the right of the Ksatrya, with the consent of the clan, to apportion land is referred to in the Satpatha Brahmana.[282]

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272. Vedic Index, I.100.
273. Early History of India, P.137 f. Oxford History of India, P,90.
274. Economic Condition in Ancient India, P.168.
275. Kautaliya-Studien I Das Grundiegentum in Indien (Bonn 1927) pp 52 f; U.N.Ghoshal Hindu Revenue System, P.168.
276. Kautilyab Arthasastra (Tr.) P.144 n.
277. India, Old and New, P.223.
277a. S.B.E., XXV.P.259-Note on Manu VIII.39.
278. R.V.X.173,6.
279. A.V.IV.4,22-2 Evam bhaja grama asvesu gosu nistham bhaja yoamitroasya.
280. Taitt.Sam., II.1,1,2;3,2;3,9,2; Mait.Sam., II.1,9;2,3; IV.2,7, etc.
281. Ait. Br., VII.29,3.
282. Sat.Br., VII.1,1,8; Vedic Index, I.246 f n 20.

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However such and other references in the early literature implying in direct by the authority of the king over everything movable and immovable, do not show explicitly that the ultimate ownership of land was vested in the state. According to Keith and Macdonell 'such an idea (of state ownership of land) was only a gradual development than that it was primitive. The power of devouring the people is a political power, not a right of ownership; precisely the same feature can be traced in South Africa, where the chief can deprive a man arbitrarily of his land, though the land is really owned by the native!'[283] That the king was the owner of land, there is no vestige of the idea beyond the word 'Grama-Kama' which much more probably refers to the grant of regalia than to the grant of land, as Teutonic parallels show.[284]

In the present context we have also to consider how the ideas regarding the ownership of land are related to the genesis of the village? We have already alluded to the opinion of Sir Henry Maine who considered that the village groups were either bodies of actual kinsmen, or groups in which time and circumstances had caused the relationship to be forgotten, so that 'the merest shadow of consanguinity survives' and 'the assemblage of cultivators is held together solely by the land which they till in common'[285] In short, the joint family begins the process, and this expands, first into a larger family-such

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283. Vedic Index, II. 215.
284. Cf. Pollock and Maitland, History of English Law, 2, 237 et. seq. Baden Powell, Village Communities in India, 83.
285. Maine, Early History of Institutions, 77-82.

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as the house communion-and finally into the 'village-group.' It would not be out of context to refer to the opinion of M.de Laveleye who deals with the question of how the structure of the tribe affects the possession of land and formation of villages. He thinks that tribe or clan, regarded as already grown up from the single family in which it necessarily originated, began with a sort of indefinite common ownership of the whole territory occupied by it. This was probably when the clan was in a pastoral stage, during which agriculture was only beginning to be adopted: it then sufficed to apportion the lands destined to cultivation, in lots that were only temporarily assigned to the different house-holds. In the course of time the regular cultivated land was more permanently divided into parcels : but even in this stage the land is regarded as the 'collective property 'of the clan because 'it returns' to the clan 'from time to time, so that a new partition may be affected.'[286]

Thus, there has been great difference of opinion on the question of ownership of land among the scholars, which has a direct bearing on the genesis of village in ancient India, since memorable works of Maine[287] and Baden Powell inaugurated the controversy. "There is no dearth of ancient authorities for every rival opinion to substantiate its claim that the land system was founded on individual, communal or royal ownership."[289]

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286. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community, 228.
287. Maine, Early History of Institutions: Village Communities in East and West.
288. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community; Village Communities in India.
289. A.N.Bose, Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, Vol.I, 38.

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According to Baden powell [290] there is not the least suggestion that Vedic Grama or village, is a group of land - holdings held in common." As to the earliest ideas of land - holding among the Aryans in a state of movement and constant warfare which the Vedic hymns represent, we do not find any direct or even covert allusion to any system of sharing the land conquered or occupied." He holds that there is no Vedic evidence that 'communities' were formed by 'village' bodies in any sense at all, far less connected with land-owning. [291] He further remarks that the "'collective ownership ; as a very early phenomenon, is a hazardous thing to assume the existence off: the very name or term is one which it is difficult to employ without bringing in a number of ideas of a kind which, instinctively as they arise in our own minds, can hardly have existed in the minds of primitive or early settlers." [292] He further writes that "the right to land grows out of the two ideas; one being that a special claim arises, to any object, or to a plot of land, by virtue of the labour and skill expanded on making it useful or profitable; the other, that a claim arises from conquest or superior might. In a very early stage, a body of primitive settlers comes to a 'boundless' area of wooded or jungle-clad but fertile plain. As each house holds group laboriously clears and renders fit for cultivation a certain area, the father, or the united family, as the case may be, regards

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290. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community, 189.
291. Ibid., 204.
292. Ibid., 399

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The plot as now collected with himself or themselves specially, in virtue of the labour expended on it.This claim is recognized by all,because every other member of the clan has the same feeling as regards the filed he has cleared."[293]

Thus the question of peasant proprietorship has a direct bearing on the genesis of village in the Vedic age.Although Maine's anology[294] with the Teutonic Mark is now generally discarded Baden Powell's theory of undiluted ownership[295] supported by most of the modern scholars does not stand close examination. "The general Hindu theory of impartible real estate is a distinct blow to the sweeping generalization made by Baden Powell when he stated that the early Aryans in India recognized only private ownership in land."[296] In view of the evidences of both individual and joint ownership of land in the Vedic age,it would not be incorrect to presume that both individual and joint ownership of land existed side by side,the latter being apparently the earlier but the decadent stage.In the process of evolution the factors related to both may have equally contributed to the genesis of the village in the early Vedic age to which we have already alluded.

Village Planning -Grama-Sannivesa.

We have scanty architectural material at our disposal regarding village planning in the Vedic age .However "the latest

293. Baden Powell,Indian Village Community,399-400.
294. That Indian and European Systems of Enjoyment and Tillage by men grouped in villagecommunities are in all essential particulars identical-Village Communities of the East and West,103.
295. Indian Village Community;Article on Origine of Village Land Tenures.in India,J.R.A.S.,Vol.XXX.
296. Hopkins,Indian Old and New,218.

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discoveries of western scholars seem to make it necessary to abandon the theory that the early Aryan invaders of India were only nomads who practice in the arts was chiefly confined to war and agriculture. If it be true as the Russian scholar, Sheftelovich ,asserts-that the Kassites,who took Balylon in 1746 B.C.,and established a dynasty there which lasted 600 years, were Aryans speeking Vedic Sanskrit,whose chief god was Suryas, Babylon must be regarded as a halfway house of the Aryan race in its march towards Indus Balley,and some at least of the early Aryan tribes must have acquired,before they entered India,not only the high spiritual culture which is reached in the Rigveda, but a prolonged experience of the civic arts including architecture, Recent German excavations on the site of Babylon show so that the science of building in Vedic times had advanced much farther than has hitherto been suspected.The Babylonians had apparently perfected the construction of radiating arches centuries before Rome was founded,and it is probable that both Roman and Indian builders derived their knowledge of it from the same source in western Asia."[297] Again,to quote P.V.Begde,[298] "The thought on the science of engineering dates back to the hoary antiquity of ancient India. We find Various references to the building arts in Rigveda,Atharvaveda and Yajurveda.""It seems that the science of building was quite advanced during the Vedic period. Description of towns and villages occur very frequently in the Vedas. It is quite certain that the Vedic civilization leaving

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297. E.B. Havell, The Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India, 3.
298. P.V.Begde,Ancient and Mediewal Town planning in India,3.

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its primitive stage far behind had registered remarkable progress in the field of building edifices and planning villages.[299] While determining the antiquity of town planning in India, Havell writes: "The close connection of the geometrical system with the Vedic sacrificial lore and the position of the master builder as a high priest or sacrificial expert, are the indirect proof of great antiquity of the Indian science of town planning; for, geometry as a science was an Indo-Aryan invention and had its origin in the complicated system of Vedic sacrifices in which it became necessary to resolve geometrical problems such as constructing a circle equal in area to the square or vice versa. the laying out of Indo-Aryan village is treated in the shilpa-Shastras as the preparation of sacrificial ground. I have therefore considered it justifiable to refer it historically to the Vedic period and to connect it with the camp or fortified settlement of the early Aryan invaders."[300]

The Vedic village was a group of houses, built near each other for purposes of safety, and was surrounded by some kind of a hedge as a protective varrier.[301] presumably they consisted of detached houses with enclosures, as is indicated by the word Ayatana[302]. Vapra[303] may also refer to some sort of protective wall or rampart surrounding the houses according to E.B.Havell, "the rite of pradakshina, which Buddhist and Jain pilgrims performed

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299. P.V.Begde, Ancient and Medieval Town planning in India, 5.
300. E.B.Havell, History of Aryan Rule in India, 25-26.
301. The Vedic Age, 398.
302. R.V.III.1,18; IV.13,1; Chand.VII.24,2.
303. A.V.VII.71,1.

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within the rails of their Stupas was the ancient rite practised by all Indo-Aryans within the walls of their villages, and the rail was merelya a symbolic adaptation to religious purposes of the heavy timber fence constructed by the hereditary village carpenters and joiners which protected the whole community from its enemies in the flesh.[304] The Vedic villages were defended by a thicket of shrubs or by stockade which enclosed the village for its defence from the attack of the hostile tribes or pastoral raiders. It seems that the practise of construction of wooden rail around the cities in subsequent ages was a development of the Vedic practise of constructing defence wall around their village.[305] The Vedic village used to be rectangular with gates on each sides.[306] The cattle of the Aryans went out of their villages for grazing through these gateways. The word Gopura is derived from this word Gam-dvara. The Torans or gateways of Sanchi were the reproduction of Gam-dvaras of the Vedic age.[307] Again, to quote Havell, "the origin of the Toran may be taken farther back than the time of Buddha to the gateway of the Vedic Indian village. Here its practical use would also be for defence, and as a watch tower upon which the village sentinels could easily clamber to survey the surrounding country and to give the alarm in case of a sudden raid upon their crops or cattle."[308]

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304. E.B.Havell, The Ancient And Medieval Architecture Of India, 28.
305. U.N.Rai, Prachin Bharat Men Nagar Tatha Nagar Jiwan, 10.
306. E.B.Havell, The History of Aryan Rule in India, 23-24.
307. U.N.Rai, Loc.cit.
308. E.B.Havell, The Ancient And Medieval Architecture Of India, 29.

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Whether these villages were close to each other, or were scattered far and wide and, if so, whether there were roads to connect them cannot be ascertained from the Rigveda. But the universal practice of certain religious rites and the substantial unity in the development of Vedic life point to the probability that they used to live either close to one another, or had means to go from one place to another. The universal habit of early migrations along the course of a river as in the case of early Teutons along the Elbe and in the case of the modern Swiss people can be applied to Indo-Aryans. They might have gone along the five rivers of the Punjab and there is evidence to support that they reached Sindh and knew the ocean.[309] We also meet with references to the treasures of the sea.[310] The story of Bhujyu, son of Tugra is repeatedly mentioned in the Rigveda.[311] This colonisation along the rivers facilitated communication from village to village, and, from analogy in colonisation, we can easily imagine that for fear of being lost to the brother families the Vedic Aryans used to settle by the side of the river: just as the early settlers in Australia colonised along the rivers only. There is additional ground to suppose in the case of the Vedic Aryans that they did not go to the interior. The non-Aryans were a powerful race and the frequent hymns of victories and prayers for protection against the Dasyus clearly prove that they were harassed by the

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309. R.V.VII.95,2.
310. R.V.I.47,6; VII.6,7; IX.97,44.
311. R.V.I.112,6; 116,3; 117,14; 119,4; VI.62,6; VII.88,7; 89,7; X.40,7; 65,12; 148,5.

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latter.In such a case there was the least likelyhood of their going in the interior to settle and breaking off all connection with the main settling places along the river.

There was easy communication between the settlement along the different rivers of the Punjab.Later on,of course with the pressure of population,they had to move to the east and south east but then they did not start in scattered groups but formed continuous or atleast connecting villages. Where these were impossible owing to geographical features,they might have constructed roads to connect one village with another. All this expansion must have beenafter the period of the Rigveda,In the subsequent age it seems that often the villages were built in close juxtaposition to each other. That the villagess were connected with roads is proved by the following passage in the Satapatha Brahmana:

"Were he (Prajapati) to complete(the sacrifice)with tame ones (Beasts),the roads would run together,the village boundaries of two villages would be contiguous ,and no ogres ,man-tigers, thieves,murderers,and robbers would come to be in the forests. By(so doing)with wild (beasts),the roads would run as under, the village boundaries of two villages would be for as under, and there would come to be ogres,man-tigers,thieves,murderers, and robbers in the forests"[312]

From this passage it is not only evident that villages were connected by roads,as stated above,but that villages were

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312. Sat.Br.XIII.2,4,2;S.B.E.,xliv.306-7.

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contiguous:that there were antisocial elements like thieves, murderers,and robbers;that there was the danger of animals like ogres (by which is meant,as Prof.Eggeling says,bears, according to the commentators Harisvamin):and that the village roads would be blocked by these dangers.We may presume that if thieves and robbers took shelter in the forests adjoining the villages,it meant that there was sufficient wealth in the villages to attract them.This suggests the material prosperity of the villages.Often these villages lay apart from each other and were connected by roads, "As a main road with a village at each end,meets both this region and that."[313] We find references to the roads in the later Vedic age."Maha-patha in the Brahmanas denotes the 'high-road'between to villages.The Mahapatha may be compared to "gramamargas " and "desamargas" of the later works on Vastu-Sastra. The important of traffic and transportation planning was greatly appreciated in ancient India,which is evident from the fact that the later works on the subject have classified villages on the basis of street planning."[314]

Most villages were probably open,but walled villages,more or less like a fort were perhaps not unknown.[315] With the passage of time some of the Aryan villages must have grown fairly big in size or extent.Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana [316] refers to large villages (mahagramah).

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313. Ait.Br.,IV.17,8;Chand.,VIII.6,2.
314. P.V.Begde,Ancient and Medieval Town Planning in India,1000
315. Amita ray,Villages,Towns and Secular Buildings in Ancient India,25.
316. Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana,III.13,4.

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Just outside and around a homestead land lay the belt of plough-land which was owned separately by individual Kulas, each ploughing his own individual plot or plots of land[317] clearly measured off.[318] Beyond the plough or Krishi land, was the communal pasture land, beyond which was the Aranya where hermits, recluses and outcastes lived in poor and humble shleters.[319] Villages were regarded as seats of quiet, ordered, harmonious life, and were contrasted, as such, with forests with alltheir wild vegetables and animal life.[319a] Girgharanya, 'wide tract of forest', in the Aitareya Brahmana[319b] and Satpatha Brahmana[319c] refers to the existence of jungles which must clearly then have covered northern India. In one of the passages of the Aitareya Brahmana[319d] it is said that in the east the villages are close together. and frequent, while in the west there are forests.

On the basis of a passage of the Rigveda,[319e] Zimmer[319f] argues that as yet we have no evidence in Vedic literature of different and varied social and economic groups living in one village, since each single village was presumably inhabited by a group of families belonging to the same clan and following the same occupation which was mainly agricultural and pastoral in character. T.H.Hutton[319g] thinks that conquered and subdued

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317. R.V.X.33,6. Cf.III.31,15; V.62,7.
318. R.V.I.110,5.
319. R.V.I.25,16; III.62,16; V.66,3; A.V.II.4,5, etc.
319a. A.V.II.34,4;
319b. Ait.Br., III.44; VI.23.
319c. Sat.Br., XIII.3,7,10.
319d. Ait.Br., III.44.
319e. R.V.II.26,3.
319f. Zimmer, AL., 159-160.
319g. T.H.Hutton, Caste in India, Ch.XII.158-60.

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dasas and dasyus who probably served as agricultural labourers and manual workers,used to live in separate village settlements of their own.Indeed ,a sort of segregation of men and women following different crafts and belonging tp different occupational groups living in separate villages,may have been operating even in pre-Vedic times amongst various occupational tribes settling down and forming into separate occupational villages."It is permissible to conjecture that the Vedic Aryans had adopted,or were obliged to adopt this pattern of occupational villages,which was presumably reinforced by conquered dasas and dasyus following different occupations and settling away from Aryan villages in separate village settlement of their own."[319h] In the Vedas there is a reference of 'Ibhya's-Village','Ibhya-grama'.The term 'Ibhya'occurs once in the Rigveda[319i] in the plural,when a king is said to devour his Ibhyas as the fire the forest. Roth[319j],Ludwig,[320] and Zimmer[321] interpret the word as retainers in the Rigveda.Thus 'Ibhya-grama'may point towards the pattern of occupational villages of the Vedic Aryans or may point to some sort of segregation of people belonging to different occupational groups settling in separate villages.A village of Nisada is mentioned in the Latyayana Srauta Sutra.[322] Again,in the

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319h. Amita Ray,Villages,Towns And Secular Buildings In Ancient India,25.
319i. R.V.1. 60,4.
319j. St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.
320. Translation of the Rigveda,3,247.
321. AL.,168.
322. Latyayana Srauta Sutra,VIII.2,8.

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ritual of the Viswajiti sacrifice[323] an Aryan is required to temporary residence with Nisadas. It may further prove separate Aryan and non-Aryan village settlements. "The villages of the aborigines must have continued to subsist, but under Aryan lordshipand control; there may be this amount of truth in Baden powell's theory, which prectically traced all the early cultivating villages in India to Dravidian origin."[324] According to Baden Powell[325] "vast ruins of forts, tanks, and other works show that the Dravadian people were builders; agriculture flourished among them, and it is impossible to suppose that the regular institution of villages, unions of villages, and territorial divisions, of which evidences meat us everywhere could have had no existence until Aryan teachers came and introduced them," He further remarks that the "Aryan settlers formed villages on the pattern they found existing."[326] However, it is at the same time, risky to see the non-Aryan in whatever elements did not exist in early Aryan society; that would be to deny to the Aryan culture any dynamism and capacity to evolve.[327]

We have many references to Sabha in the Vedas, to which great importance seems to have been attached by the Vedic Aryans.[328]

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323. Kausitaki Brahmana, XXV.15; Latyayana Srauta Sutra, VIII.2,8; Panca.Br., XVI.6,8, etc.
324. Vedic Index, II.388.
325. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community, 162.
326. Ibid, 184.
327. A.Ghosh, The City In Early Historical India, 4.
328. R.V.VI.28,6; VIII.4,9; 10.34,6; X.71,10; A.V. V.31,6; VII.12, 1.2; VIII.10,5; XII.1,56; XIX.55,6; Taitt.Sam., I.7,6,7; Mait. Sam., IV.7,4; Vaj.Sam., III.45; XVI.24; XX.17; Taitt.Br., I.1, 10,6; Sat.Br., II.3,2,3; V.3,1,10; Kausitaki Brahmana, 7.9, etc.

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As we shall see it also denoted a hall of the village assembly.[329] According to Amita Ray,"Each Vedic Aryan village settlement seems to have had a public village assembly hall situated presumably in the centre of the village where villagers gathered for village festivities,ceremonies and discussions."[330]

Architecture:

"Architecture is the matrix of civilization."It is the principal visible and material record of man's intellectual evolution.It reveals in substantial form the aspirations of the people and also their life-style. Architecture was certainly one of the arts to which ancient Indians gave considerable attention. However,untill 1922A.D.archaeologists considered that "before the rise of the Mauryan Empire a well developed and flourishing civilization had existed in India for at least a thousand years;yet of the structural monuments erected during those ages not one example has survived save the Cyclopean walls of Rajgriha."[331] This was before the Indusvalley sites were unearthed.Since the discovery of the Indusvalley civilization,a small portion of the missing chapter was revealed.The architectural remains at the Indusvalley sites take the antiquity of Ancient Indian architecture to some 5000years back.

According to Percy Brown the "Vedic culture of India provides the material for study of the first efforts at building

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329. Vedic Index,II,326.
330. Amita Ray,Villages,Towns And Secular Buildings In Ancient India,2b.
331. Marshall In Wheeler's:The Indus Civilization,1.

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construction, when man's efforts were made in response to a need and before any ideas of architectural effect were conceived.[332] The Aryans were originally nomads, who on settling down in the plains of India became partly pastoral and partly agricultural, having as their habitations rudimentary structures of reeds and bamboo thatched with leaves. Percy Brown thinks that it was from such temporary erections as these, and the various simple expedients devised to meet the needs of the forest-dwellers that Indian architecture had its beginning. To quote Percy Brown, "In many countries there is an age when the inhabitants lived in forests so that they became closely identified with their woody environment, as their ancient folk-lore frequently testifies. According to the natural disposition and trend of these people the period during which they practised wooden construction was long or short but it was inevitably followed in the course of time by the employment of more permanent materials for building purposes. With the early inhabitants of India the timber age appears to have been a long one, due no doubt to the vast extant of the Mahavana or Great Wood "in which they were cradled .... So closely connected with their existence were these forests that the early people developed a dexterity in wooden construction of a very high standered. Their pronounced manipulative skill in this material may be accounted for by their prolonged apprenticeship to the wooden worker's craft when they were forced to rely on the trees around them for many of the necessities of life. In the Rigveda the carpenter is

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332. Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Periods) P.3.

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recorded as holding the place of honour among all artizens as on his handi-work the village community depended for some of its most vital needs.It is not remarkable therefore,in view of this timber tradition that its constructional features were freely and closely imitated in the rock and stone architecture which eventuated and was the form of expression for many centuries afterwards."[333] Architecture of the early Vedic Aryan was mostly wooden and hence we find that the workers in wood and stone were considered at one time,of one and the same caste. "Brahamanaspatif fashioned the earth and heaven from wood as carpenters fashioned wooden houses." These wooden houses were often movable."Like a women O Dwelling,we carry thee where we will."[334] Such houses were often presented to the Brahmanas who accepted them with recitation of the mantras.[335]

As we shall presently see it wood not be very correct to agree with the authors of the Vedic Index,Keith and Macdonell that "very little is known of the structures of the house"[336] in the Vedas.It is not the intention of this thesis to enter into the thorny question of whether the Indus Valley civilization can be regarded as Aryan or pre-Aryan and are of anterior date.Majority of the scholars agree that the Aryans destroyed the city-dwellers of the Indus Valley civilization. In the Rigveda we read the chief Aryan war-god Indra,a model

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333. Percy Brown,Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Period) P.4.
334. A.V.IX.3,24.
335. A.V.IX.3,24.
336. Vedic Index,230.

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of marauding bronze age chieftain, as busy looting the stored treasures of the godless (nidhin adevan amrnad ayasyah).[337] This presumably refers to the Indus-Valley settlers. However it would be fallicious to assume, as Dr. Coomaraswamy has done,[338] that Indo-Aryans borrowed most of their architectural ideas from the non-Aryan tribes which became subject to them. There is absolutely no historical evidence that this was the case but per contra there is strong reason for believing that all the higher culture of the ancient Indian village communities, including their organization, arts and crafts, was directly due to Aryan inspiration.[339]

The Village Boundary:

We can visualize the kind of building that the early Vedic Aryans found suitable for their purposes from a variety of resources. Apart from the evidence supplied by the vast Vedic literature, Percy Brown thinks that the "significant character of the subsequent architecture which reproduces in many of its aspects the type of structure from which it originated."[340] On this basis he describes the defence of the Aryan villages. In order to protect themselves from the ravages of wild animals, they surrounded the villages with a special kind of fence or palisade. "This fence took the form of a bamboo railing the upright posts (thabha) of which supported three horizontal bars called suchi or needles, as they were

337. R.V.X.138,4.
338. Coomaraswamy, Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon, 107.
339. E.B.Havell, the Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India, 45.
340. Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu period). P.3.

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threaded through holes in the uprights. In the course of time peculiar type of railing became the emblem of protection and universally used,not only to enclose the village,but as a paling around fields,and eventually to preserve anything of a special or sacred nature.In the palisade encircling the village,entrances also of a particular kind were devised. These were formed by projecting a section of the bamboo fence at right angles and placing a gateway in advance of it after the fashion of a barbican,the actual gateway resembling a primitive porticullis (gamadvara).Through these gamadvaras the cattle passed to and from their pasturage."[341]

The Vedic Altar-Vedi:

"The Vedic alter made of piled up bricks is the earliest monument of Indian architecture.[342] In the early Vedic age the altar used to be square in shape.[343] The word Suparna indicates the practice prevalent in the Vedic age and onwards that Prasast Vedi should be like Garuda in shape (Syenaciti).[344] The construction of different type of altar for different Vedic sacrifices involved and intricate knowledge of geometry and architecture. Some altars resembled the figure of a women,some of semi circle,some of circle,some resembled flying falcon. More than six hundred bricks were needed to erect

341. E.B.Havell,The Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India,45.
342. Stella Kramrisch, The Art Of India Through The Age,16.
343. R.V.X.114,3.
344. K.D. Bajpai,Bharitya Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,38.

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complex type of altars.The construction of fire ~~that~~ altar with ten thousand and eight hundred bricks shaped like a colossal flying falcon with wings out spread bespeaks super architectural skill. The intricate process of construction of this fire-altar is recorded in the Satapatha Brahmana. Such altars can be termed sculptural architecture or architectural sculpture because the art of sculpture must shake hands with architecture in the creation of such altars.The Vedic Altar was an elevated piece of ground serving for a sacrificial altar generally strewn with kusa grass and having receptacles for the sacrificial fire,it was more or less raised and of various shapes,but usually narrow in the middle,on which account the female waist is often compared to it.[345]

In the Vedic literature Citi denotes those sacrificial altars in which the sacred fire was kept burning.Satapatha Brahmana [346]describes the construction of a Citi.It was made of bricks. In the earlier stages only unbaked bricks were used. baked bricks must have been used later on.[347]

Smasana:

It is referred in the Vedas.[348]It has been used in the Atharvaveda at several places.[349]Smasana denoted the 'burial-mound' in which the bones of the dead were laid to rest.

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345. Sat. Br.,I.2,5.
346. Sat.Br.VIII.1.
347. K.D.Bajpai, Bhartiya Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,38.
348. Vedic Index,II.397.
349. A.V.II.11,17;V.31,8;VIII.33,6;10.1,18.

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In the Satapatha Brahmana this word has been used for 'Savanna'(food for the dead)or Smasanma (food for the Pitras). According to Nirukta[350] of Yaska this word means Sava-Sayana (resting place of the dead).According to Weber[351] it means 'Asmana-Sayana'(a resting place built of stones).It is not definite whether stone was used in the beginning or not.Megliths found at various places in India may be regarded as a form of Smasana.[352]

Satapatha Brahmana precribes certain rules regarding erection of these smasanas or burial mounds.Smasana was built as a resting place or a memorial of the dead.[353] The Satapatha Brahamana prescribes a four-cornered mound facing the south east on a ground inclined to the north and out of sight of the village in a peaceful spot amid beautiful surroundings or on barren ground. For an Agni-cit (builder of fire altar a funeral mound like a fire-altar is prescribed.[354] According to Dr. S.R. Rao,"The mud-brick lining in grave no.7 at Lothal follows the plan of an'Agni-cit'-fire altar."[355]

The Yupa:

The pillar seems to have been one of the most important part of the buildings in this age.Rigveda contains many allusions to mansions of thousand pillars .[356] Indra is described as

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350. Yaska,Nirukta,III.5.
351. Beni Madho Barua,Barhut,Vol.III.P.16 and Onwards.
352. K.D.Bajpai,Bhartiya Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,39.
353. Ibid.
354. Vedic Index,II.397.
355. S.R.Rao,Lothal A Harappan Port Town (1955-62)Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India,142.
356. R.V.II.41,5;V.62,6.

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Skabhiyan, best possessor of pillars.[357] Pillar (Stambha) is also referred to in the Kathaka Samhita[358] and often in the Sutras. Sthuna also denoted the 'Pillar' or 'post' of a house in the Rigveda[359] and later.[360] The building was supported on pillars.[361] The Rigveda gives us a good picture of a vaulted or conical roof[362] on three pillars made stable in their foundations. The pillar was raised on the foundation which was called Dharuna.[363] It seems that the size of some of these pillars used to be fairly big. There is a reference to a big pillar raised as Mahat Skambha,[364] having a tall shaft (Barshman)[365] raised aloft (you ar (Urdhvamtishtha)[366] and considered to be an emblem of universal prosperity (Uchchhrayasva mahate saubhgaya)[367] as a yupa or Indra's Banner. The word stabhnat used for a pillar (Skambhanena Stabhanat)[368] gave the later word stambha. These pillars must have been wooden. Dru-pada, a wooden pillar or post is several times referred to in the Rigveda[369] and later.[370]

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357. R.V.X.111,5; I.39,2; IV.13,5, etc.
358. Kath. Sam., XXX.9; XXXI.1.
359. R.V.I.59,1; V.45,2; 62,7; VIII.17,14; X.18,13.
360. A.V.III.12,6; XIV.1,63; Sat.Br.XIV.1,3,7; 3,1,22, etc.; Sthuna-Raja, 'Main Pillar'; III.1,1,11; 5,1,1. Cf. Zimmer, AL., 153.
361. Skambhena adharyat, R.V.VIII.41,10.
362. Trayah Skamabkasah Skabhitasah, R.V.I.34,2.
363. Skambham Dharune, R.V.X.44,4.
364. R.V.VI.47,5.
365. R.V.III.8,31.
366. III.8,1 (R.V.)
367. R.V.III.8,2.
368. R.V.VI.47,5.
369. R.V.I.24,13; IV.32,23.
370. A.V.VI.63,3; 110,2; XIX.47,9; Vaj. Sam.XX.20.

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The adjective Vanaspati[371] used for these posts also indicates that they must have been wooden. Yupa has a religious significance. Mantras were recited before it was erected on the ground. These mantras tell us about the size of these Yupas. Yupas were to be erected in the east of the Vedi(Citi). Height of the Yupas are referred to in the Brahmanas.It shows that prescribed rules regarding the measurement etc.of these Yupas was strictly followed.More than one Yupa were erected in a row.It was decorated by garlands.The crown of these Yupas (Chhasala) was made a little curbed the shape of the stone Yupas of the subsequent period was determined by these Chhasalas. Brahmanas refer to octagonal Yupas.It seems that octagonal Yupas and other type of stone pillar were subsequently developed from these Yupas. Two elegant Yupas found in Isapur village of Mathura are Octagonal.They bear and inscription of Kusan ruler Vasiska in Brahmi. It refers to the performance of a Vedic sacrifice Dvadasaratra in Saka era 28(106 A.D.)[372] Special Yupas are referred to in the Rigveda and later.[373] It means a'post',usually that to which the sacrificial victim was tied.[374] The tradition of erecting Vedic Yppas continue during the subsequent ages. Such Yupas have been found at

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371. K.D.Bajpai,Bhartiya Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,37.
372. Archaeological Survey reports,1906-7,P.119 and onwards; Bajpai,Braj Ka Itihasa,Part,2.P.29.
373. R.V.V. 2,7;A.V.IX.6,22;XII.1,38;XIII.1,47;Taitt.Sam.VI. 3,4,1;VII,2,1,3;Vaj.Sam.,XIX.17;Panca.Br.,IX.10,2,etc.
374. Vedic Index II.194.

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Mathura,Nandasa,Kota,Badava etc. On the basis of epigraphic evidence we know that Vedic sacrifices were performed for a pretty long time. Yupa is also depicted on local coins of Ayodhya,Kausambi etc.and on several tribal coins as well as on the board coins of Samudragupta and Kumaragupta I.

The House Building:

It seems that the art of House-building was quite well developed even in the early Vedic age.In the Vedas we come across various terms about the architectural lay-out and different parts of a building.In the Vedas the house is eferred to by several names such as Dama,[375] Griha,[376] Pastya,[377] Sadana,[378] Durona,[379] Harmya,[380] Kshiti,[381] Duryaona,[382] Dhaman,[383] Nivesana,[384] Gaya,[385] Vasati,[386] Agara,[387] Ayatana,[388] Pratistha,[389]

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375. R.V.I.1,8;61,9;75,5;143,4;II.1,2,etc.Vaj.Sam.,VIII.24.
376. R.V.III.53,6;IV.49,6;VIII.10,1,etc.;A.V.VII.83,1;106,4; Ait.Br.VIII.21;In Plural R.V.II.42,3;V.76,4;X.18,12;85, 26,142,4;165,2;A.V.I.27,4;III.10,11;VI.137,1;Ait.Br.II. 31;VIII.26;Vaj.Sam.,II.32;IV.33;XVIII.44;Sat.Br.I.1,2, 22;6,1,19,etc.
377. R.V.I.25,10;40,7;164,30;IV.1,11;VI.49,9;VII.97,5;IX.65, 23;X.46,6.
378. Vedic Index,II.421.
379. R.V.III.1,18;25,5;IV.13,1;V.73,4;A.V.VII.17,3;Vaj.Sam. XXXIII.72.
380. R.V.VII.56,16;Cf.X.106,5.
381. R.V.I.65,3;III.13,4;V.37,4,etc.
382. R.V.I.174,7;V.29,10;32,8.
383. R.V.I.144,1;II.3,2;III,55,10;VII.61,4;87,2;10.13,1,etc.; A.V.25,7;VII.68,1;XII.1,52;Vaj.Sam.,IV.34;Taitt.Ar.II.7,2.
384. R.V.IV.19,9;VII.19,5.
385. R.V.I.74,2;V.10,3;44,7;VI.2,8,etc.
386. R.V.I.31,15;V.2,6;Vaj.Sam.,XVIII.15;Taitt.Br.II.3,8,4;III. 7,3,3.,etc.
387. Kausitaki Upanisad,II.15.
388. R.V.III.1,18;IV.13,1;Chand.VII.24,2.
389. A.V.VI.32,3=VIII.8,21;St. Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.

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Vesaman,[390] Sarma,[391] and Vidatha. To this list we may add the term Ocas given by Prof. Max-Mauller long ago.[392] These synonyms some times throw light on the salient features of the house of the Aryans. Dama (from the root dam, 'control) according to Roth, denotes place in which a man wielded uncontrolled power. They constructed quite secure dwellings (Ksitir dhruva).[394] which was quite natural for them in face of hostile attacks from the non-Aryans. Chardis occurs often in the Rigveda denoting a secure dwelling place. Pastya and Harmya denote more especially the home will its surroundings, the family settlement.[395] Harmya denotes the Vedic 'House' as a unity including the stabling,[396] and so forth, and surrounding by a fence or wall of some sort.[397] It seems that the house building activity of the Aryans started with the change in their nomadic mode of life as the phrase 'Pratistha-kama; 'one desirous of a fixed abode'[398] would indicate. "The Aryan colonists lived in their houses for they had already changed the movable tent of the shepherd and nomade for a more fixed shelter."[399] That they made comfortable houses is indicated by the word Sarma.[400] The idea of reaching home was one of great

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390. R.V.X.107,10;146,3;A.V.V.17,13;IX.6,30;Ait.Br.,VIII.24,6.
391. R.V.I.51,15;VII.82,1,
392. Max-Muller, Chips. from a German workshop, IV.P.424(London1875)
393. St.Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.
394. R.V.I.73,4;VII,88,7.
395. Vedic Index, I.512.
396. R.V.VII.56,16.
397. R.V.VII.55,6.
398. Taitt.Sam.,II.1,3,4;Panca.Br.XXIII.18,1,etc.
399. Adolf Kaegi, The Rigveda, P.12, Translated by Arrowsmith.
400. R.V.I.51,15;VII.82,1.

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joy.[401] Their houses used to be surrounded by a fence as it is indicated by the word Ayatana.[402]

A house was regularly planned and measured.[403] It had three main parts, a clear scheme which continued throughout as the basic lay-out of a house or palace in India. The first part was the door with its fore-court called Dvara.[404] Dvar is frequently used from the Rigveda[405] onwards[406] to denote the 'door' of a house and from it the house is called Durona.[407] The later form, Dvara has the same sense.[408] 'Dur' is also used several times in the Rigveda[409] to denote door. The frame-work of the door of a house appears to be denoted by the plural of the word Ata[410] and Durya[411] which probably denoted 'doorposts.' The house could be shut by a door ,[412] According to Roth[413] The strap fastening the door of a house was called Syuman.[414] The 'door-fastener' is called Dvara-pidhana in the Satapatha Brahmana.[415] Wooden pin of a door was called Argala.[416] The second

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401. R.V.I.116,25.
402. R.V.III.1,18;IV.13,1;Amita Ray,Villages Towns and Secular Buildings In Ancient India,24.
403. A.V.IX.3,19.
404. V.S. Agrawal,Indian Art,41,
405. R.V.I.13,6.
406. A.V.VIII.3,22;XIV.1,63;Vaj.Sam.XXX.10;Sat.Br.XI.1,1,2; XIV.3,1,13,etc.
407. R.V.III.1,18;IV.13,1;V.76,4;A.V.VII.17,3;Vaj.Sam.XXXIII.72,
408. Sat. Br.I.6,1,19;IV.3,5,9;6,7,9;XII 4,2,etc.
409. R.V.I.88,10;113,4;121,4;188,5;II.2,7;etc.
410. R.V.I.56,5;113,4;III.43,6;IX.5,5(atmih).
411. Zimmer AL.,148-156.
412. R.V.VII.85,6.
413. St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.
414. R.V.III.61,4.
415. Sat.Br.XI.1,1,1.Cf. dvara-bahu,'door posts'in the Latyayana Sraute Sutra,I.3,1;II.3,9.
416. Sankhayana Aranyaka,II.16.

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part of the house was Sadas, corresponding to the Asthana-mandapa, Sabha Asthayika of later literature. This was the male apartment or the room for receiving guests.[417] It was a sitting room.[418]

The place for the reception of guests, especially the Brahmanas and others on the occassion of feasts and sacrifices was called Avasatha.[419] Another important part of the house consisted of a female apartment called Patninam Sadana,[420] same as the Antahpura of later literature. The phrase seems to be borrowed from Patnisala,[421] but for the wife, of the Brahmana ritual. Another important part of the house was Agnisala[422] in which the sacredfires were kept burning[423]. It was a part of an ordinary house, presumably the central hall where the fire place was situated.[424] In the Rigveda the word Astri seems to denote a fire place.[425]

The house had open spaces as an integral part of its lay-out called Ydara. This was spacious in the female aprtments

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417. V.S.Agrawal, Indian Architecture, 41.
418. Vedic Index, I.231.
419. A.V.IX.6,5; Taitt.Br.I.1,10,6; III.7,4,6; Sat.Br.XII.4,4,6;
420. A.V.IX.3,7.
421. Vaj.Sam., XIX.18, Sat.Br.IV.6,9,8; X.2,3,1; Ait.Br.V.22,
422. (Sala); Kausitaki Brahmana XIX.6, etc.
422a. Vaj.Sam.XIX.18; A.V.IX.3,7, Cf. Bloomfielf, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 598, AL., 154.
423. R.V.I.69,2.
424. Vedic Index, I.9.10.
425. R.V.X.165,3, Cf. Schrader, Prehistoric Antiquities, 347. The small raised plateforms with a rectangular enclosure of baked bricks in the houses at Lotal, may be identified with the Agnisala of the Vedic period. S.R.Rao, Lothal (1955-62) Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India No.78, P.217, 251.

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called pratīchi, the back portion (Pichhabada) as contrasted with the front portion which was Sadas itself. In between the Sadas, the public hall and the Patni-sadan, the female apartment seems to have the site of the open court yard where the havirdhana and Agnisala were sited.[426] Zimmer conjecturally identifies the Agnisala with central room, Havirdhana with place for keeping the grain etc.[427], the Patninam Sadana with the women's apartments, and the Sadas with the subsidiary buildings.[428] The entire house was to be surrounded by a wall.[429] If the house holder happened to be an artisan, the homestead contained also an additional workshop, which was presumably avesana-sala of the Pali texts.

Attached to the house in the first court were also the broad spaces for cows and horse, both of whom formed an essential part of the domestic economy in Vedic times.[430] The Vedic house held not only the family which might be of considerable size, but also cattle and sheep at night.[431] The granary was called Upanas.[432] Vasavi in one passage of the Rigveda[433] denotes, according to Roth,[434] a 'treasure house.'

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426. V.S.Agrawal, Indian Art, 42.43.
427. Cf.A.V.III.3,4.
428. Vedic Index I.231, foot note 14.
429. Vedic Index, I.245.
430. Asvavati Gomati Sala, A.V.III.12,2., Gobhyo Asvebhyo Namo Yachchhalayam Vijayate, A.V.IX.3,13.
431. R.V.VII.56,16; A.V.I.3,4; IX.3,13.
432. A.V.II.14,2.
433. R.V.X.73,4.
434. St.Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.

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There were several kinds of houses both big and small, e.g., Mana and Sala, the former denoting a rich man's house or palace (Brihat Mana), and the later a middle man's average house.[435] Adjectives such as Prthu, Samprapya, Mohi, Brhat, Uru, Dirgha, and Gambhira used for the houses may indicate elegant buildings of fairly big size. A house with a thousand doors are said to have belonged to god Varuna.[436] Adjective Tridhatu has also been used for Sarma,[437] which according to Sayana may also denote a house. Tridhatu may denote a three storeyed building.[438] The house (Harmy)[439] was large enough to contain not only a large family, but also pens for cattle and sheep, and evidently had many rooms with a special place for the Garhapatya fire which was kept continuously burning.[440] Elegant building are also referred to in the Rigveda. It refers to Sahasra-Sthūna, a house on a thousand pillars adorned with gold in-lay (Hiranya-Rūpa) on a sheeting of copper (Ayah-sthunam).[441] A grandiose structure resting on a thousand columns is stated to be Sadas, which could only be a public audience-hall.[442] As we shall see Sabhā and Samiti were the to important assemblies of the Āryans. According to Dr. V. S. Agrawal: "It must

435. V.S.Agrwal, Indian Art, 41.
436. R.V.VII.88,5.
437. R.V.I.61,15; VII.8,2.1.
438. Tarapada Bhattacharya, A study on vastu Vidya, 17-18.
439. R.V.VII.56,16; Cf.X.106,5.
440. The Vedic Age, 462.
441. R.V.V.62,2.
442. R.V.II.41,5.

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have been to convene sessions of the Samiti that the need for a thousand pillared hall with the king himself shated at one end was felt![443] Rigveda refers to a big house or palace having a thousand door(Sahsra-dvara-griha)called Brihanta Mana,[444] the main entrance being known as Prathama Dvar.In the Rigveda we also find references to Sata-Bhuji[445] and Satadvara,[446]a house with a hundred columns and a hundred doors.The phrase Navaddvara occurs in the Atharvaveda.[447]We read of Mahasala in the Upinasadas.[448]Some houses had two,four ,six,eight or ten walls(Dvipaksha,Chatushpaksha,Shatpaksha,Dasapaksha)[449]. Paksha seems to denote wall which in dialects today is called Pakkha.[450]The walls of the houses used to be thick to make it secure.The crevices in the walls were filled up with straw or reeds.[451]tied in (Palada)bundles and the whole was to some extent covered with the same material .Reed work,ita,[452]is spoken of as a part of the finishing of the walls. A room was called Kulaya and rooms with in rooms were planned (Kulaye adhikulayam),and a storey as Kosa of which several were superimposed (Kose-kosah samubjitah).[453]The Sala-Sukta of the

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443. Indian Art,41.
444. R.V.VII.88,5.
445. Sir.Monier Williams, A Sanskrit English Dictionary,P.1049.
446. Ibid.
447. A.V.X.8,43.
448. Sir Monier Williams,A Sanskrit English Dictionary,P.108.
449. A.V.IX.3,21.
450. V.S.Agrawal,Indian Art,42.
451. A.V.IX.3,5.17.
452. A.V.IX.3,18.
453. A.V.IX.3,20.

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Atharvaveda[454] gives us a good idea of the construction of a house. Vedic houses were mostly made of good. Even houses of big dimensions were constructed of timber[455] although use of stone and bricks was not altogether unknown. This was the material of which the ideal house of Parameshthi Prajapati was made and the same model was adopted by human beings (Prajayai Chakre).

A house was raised on a foundation of pillars of big size, either one or more according to the needs. It was the practice to suppprt the roof on three rows of pillars.[456] The upright pillars called were called upmit.[457] On these upright pillars leaning rafter called Pratimit[458] were placed at an angle as props. Strong cross -beams connecting the upright pillars (upmits) horizontally was called Parimit.[459] The ridge in the centre called Parimit (Later Prachinavamsa or Pragvamsa) was protuberants arranged in a line on the middle ridge.[460] The roof formed of ribs of bamboo cane (Vamsa),[461] a ridge

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454. A.V.IX.3,3.
455. A.V.IX.3,11.
456. R.V.I.34,2.
457. R.V.I.59,1; IV.8,1; A.V.IX.3,1.
458. A.V.IX.3,1. Cf. Zimmer, Al., 153; bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 596.
459. A.V.IX.3,1; Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 596; Zimmer Al., 158; whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 525; Vedic Index. I. 495.
460 A.V.IX.3,8.
461. A.V.III.12,6, IX.3,4; Vait. Sam. IV.8,10; Taitt. Br. I.2,3,1; Sat. Br. IX.1,2,25; Sala Samsa, Ait. Ar., III.2,1; Sankhayana Aranyaka, VIII.4. where the main beam of the house is meant. Cf. Zimmer, Al., 71, 153; Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 346.

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called visuvant,[462] and a net (Akasu),[463] which may mean a thatched covering over bamboo ribs. However according to bl Bloomfield Aksu[464] was a covering of wicker-work stretched across a beam and sloping down to both sides, and this best explains the epithet 'thousand-eyed' (i.e., with countless holes) ascribed to it. It seems likely that, as the ribs were of bamboo and were probably fixed in a ridge, the roof was wagon headed like the huts of the Todas atthe present day,[465] and the rock-cut Chaityas, or assembly Hall, of the Buddhists in Western India, in some of the earliest of which the wooden ribs of the arched roof are still preserved.[466] In the Atharvaveda[467] a roof is compared with a standing female elephant. This refers to the vaulted roofing which be see in a developed form in the Chaitya-halls of Western India.[468]

In the Rigveda the thatch of a house is denoted by the word Chadis.[469] Atharvaveda prefers to a house 'having a large roof' (Brhac-chandas).[470] In the construction of the thatched

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462. A.V.IX.3,8; Cf. Ab., 151; Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 598; Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 526.
463. R.V.I.180,5; A.V.VIII.8,18; IX.3,18.
464. Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 598.
465. Rivers, The Todas, 25, 27, 28, 51.
466. Fergusson, History of Indian Architecture, 2, 135, Cf. 126.
467. A.V.IX.3,17. Hastini Padvati Mita Prithivyam Tishthati.
468. V.S. Agrawal, Indian Art, 44.
469 R.V.X.85,10.
470. A.V.III.12,3; Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 345; Cf. Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 105.

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roof a number of unsplit bamboos (Vamsa) were laid in the parallel rows secured at one end by a stoutertape made of twisted Manja grass which seems to be the same as Pranaha of the Sala-Sukta.[471] The bamboos were tightly held cross-wise also by other strings referred to here as Nahana.[472] "Two processes were distinguished ,the first a net-work of unsplit bamboos with a crosswise sprit bamboos above it. This was Ayama ,a square or rectangular frame-work now called Thata or Thattara. The second process was covering it with several layers of straw which is referred to here as Barhana[473] (Sam-babarha).... This was again covered by split bamboos sticks and the upper and lower layers were fastened by knots called Granthi,same now called gunth."[474] The Sala Sukta of the Atharvaveda also refers to the material used for preparing a thatched house. Irna,[475] grass,was used as straw to roof in a house or hut.[476] Irna refers to several kins of grasses like Munja,Sara, Kusa, Kasa, Virana etc.[477] Another grass called Plada[478] was also used to thatch the house and render the sides wind and weather proof.[479] Palada denoted the straw obtained from rice and wheat plants.[480] To prevent the thatched roof from

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471. V.S.Agrawal,Indian Art,43.
472. A.V.IX.3,4. Vamsamam Nahananam.
473. A.V.IX.3,3.
474. A.V.IX.3,3. Granthims ,Chakare Te Dridhan.
475. R.V.I.161,1;162,8.11;X.102,10,etc.;A.V.II.30,1;VI.54,1, etc.;Ait.Br.,III.22;VIII.24,etc.
476. A.V.III.12,5;IX.3,4.7.
477. V.S.Agrawal,Indian Art,43.
478. A.V.IX.3,5.17.
479. Vedic Index,I.505.
480. A.V.IX.3,17.;Cf.V.S.Agrawal,Indian Art,43.

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slipping down and to keep it secured to the main beams and pillars,it was held together with ties of strong ropes called Parisvanjalya.[481] Samdamsa denoted a clamp or strut.[482] The slings or hanging vessels (Sikya) inside the house from the roof are also mentioned.[483]

By the later Vedic age some of the houses used to be fairly big and elegant as is indicated by the term Brihat-Chhanda ,having a big lay out both in loftiness and plan. However the word Prasada in the sense of 'palace' does not occur until,the late Adbhuta Brahamana.[484] The Sankhayana Srauta Sutra[485] refers to Prakara,which denotes a walled mound supporting a raised plateform(Prasada) for spectators.[486] A 'treasure-house '(Dhana-dhani)is mentioned in the Taittiriya Aranyaka.[487] It probably indicates a special type of room or house[488] and was used as a treasure-house.[489] The Satapatha Brahamana also refers to baked bricks (Pakva)[490] Some people possessed many houses.[491]

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481. A.V.IX.3,4.5.
482. Ibid.
483. A.V.IX.3,6;Whitney,Translation of Atharvaveda,526 etcseq.; Bloomfield ,Hymns of the Atharvaveda,597.
484. Vedic Index,II.51.
485. Sankhayana Srauta Sutra,XVI.18,14.
486. Vedic Index,II.44.
487. Taitt.Ar.,X.67.
488. The Vedic Age,462.
489. K.D.Bajpai,Bhartiya,Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,35.
490. Sat.Br.VI.1,2,22;VII.2,1,7.
491. A.V.VII.73,1,Puru-dama.Both,St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v. Whitney,Translation of the Atharvaveda,437.

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In the Rigveda an entire hymn is devoted to the chief architect Vastoshpati:

"Acknowledge us, O Gaurdian of the Homestead:
bring no disease, and give us happy entrance.
Whate'er we ask thee, be pleased to grant it,
and prosper thou quadrupeds and bipeds.
Protector of the Home, be our promoter:
increase our wealth in kine and steeds, O Indu.
May we be ever-youthful in thy friendship:
be pleased in us as in his sons a father.
Through thy dear fellowship that bringeth welfare,
may we be victors, Gaurdian of the dwelling
protect our happiness in rest and labour.
Preserve us ever-more, ye Gods, with blessings"[492]

The house was made beautiful (Ranya), decorated and was the object of attraction for all (Visva-Vara). It is compared to a beautiful bride as we some times do in our own times.[493] At another place it has been compared to a decorated elephant.[494] The house was the real place where the whole cycle of life was unfolded and hence the Aryanadored his house like a goddess. The Sala Sukta of the Atharvaveda refers to the delightful home overflowing with stores of food, and full of laughter and merriment.[495] A hymn in the Atharvaveda[496] glorifies a dwelling

492. R.V.VII.54,1-3.
493. A.V.IX.3,24, Vadhumiva te sale .
494. A.V.IX.3,17.
495. A.V.IX.3.
496. A.V.IX.3.

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house thus;He who fixed thee,O dwelling (who)brought together the forests trees unto progeny ,O dwelling,he,(as a)most exalted Prajapati,made thee,[497]

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"homage to him,homage to the giver,and to the lord of the dwelling we pay:homage to the forth-moving fire,and to thy spirit (be)homage.[498]

"Rich in refreshment,rich in milk,fixed built upon the earth, bearing all food,O dwelling,do not thou injure those accepting (thee)[499]

The house may be two sided,four sided,six sided,eight sided or even ten sided the house is the peace-giver to mind.I take shelter in it as fire in its womb.[500]

The Atharvaveda refers to the joyous spirit of the Aryans in association of their homes in a hymn devoted to Sala and Vatoshpati.[501] It also refers to some of the architectural features of the houses,viz.,its being thatched and having a big lay out (Brihat-chhanda)[502]both in loftiness and plan.It is also said that a big cross-beam(Vamsa)was supported on smaller wooden posts called Sthuna.[503] According to Satapatha Brahmana the house used to be planned in two parts,the first called

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497. A.V.IX.3,11.
498. A.V.IX.3,12.
499. A.V.IX.3,16.
500. A.V.IX.3,21.
501. A.V.III.12.
502. A.V.III.12,3.
503. A.V.III.12,8.

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Purvadha. Dr. V.S.Agrawal holdes that it was the same as Sadas or male apartment.[504] It was here that the main upright pillar called Varshishtha Sthunaraja was erected.[505]

House-Building Rituals:

The Vedic Aryans seem to have observed certain rites and rituals connected with the laying of foundation of and first entrance to dwelling houses. These rites and rituals seem to have been adopted and integrated in the later civilization of aancinct India. Such rituals had been in bogue even in the time of the Rigveda and Atharvaveda. Subsequently they formed apart of the brahmanical rituals as represented by the Grihya-Sutras. An analysis of the rituals would reveal that these practices were intended to propitiate the evil spirits that were supposed to haunt a vastu or a site selected for the building of dwelling houses for human beings. They were also intended for invocations of spirits that were supposed to protect the buildings and their inmates from natural calamities, disease and death. Some of the rites were also of magical significance and not often connected with fertility cults.

The Rigveda contains frequent mention of Vastupati or lord of the Vastu,[506] i.e., dwelling house. In several hymns the celeberation of the Vastoshpati is referred to, and the indication is that a firm post which is the symbol of Vastoshpati is the centre of the celebration.[507] The spirit of the Vastoshpati

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504. Indian Art, 44.
505. Sat.Br., III.5,1,1.
506. R.V.II.54,1-3;55,1.
507. R.V.VIII.17,4;A.V.III.12.

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is invoked and the firm post is supposed to keep off the calamity.This god was invoked before the construction of the buildings.[508] In the Rigveda at one place Vastoshpati and Indra are regarded as one and the same god. At another Vastoshpati and Tvastra have been regarded identical.In the later literature on architecture or Vastuvidya Tvastra has been regarded as an expert mason.[509] The Atharvaveda too has a series of hymns pertaining to Vastoshpati,entitled Vastoshpatyani.[510] A particular hymn of the Atharvaveda[511] was recited when the central post was fixed. The crossbeam ,smeared with dregs of ghee,was placed on the post with the recitation of mantra.[512] The following prayer was recited--"Be thou oh cross-beam, ascend the post according to regulation;do thou mighty ruling hold off the enemies.May they that approach thee reverently, oh house,not suffer injury;may all our heroes live a hundred autumn."[513] Here in this chapter almost all the hymns pray frequently for the happiness,properity and abundance of the dwellers.Thus in one hymn addressed to the Vastoshpati,we read,-"a supporter art thou,oh house,with broad roof containing purified grain .To thee may the calf come,to thee the child , to thee the milch cow... oh mistress of dwelling,clothed in grass,be thou kindly disposed,give us moreover wealth along with heroes...hither to this house hath come the tender child,

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508. Tarapada Bhattacharya, A Study on Vastu Vidya,13.
509. K.D.Bajpai ,Bhartiya Vastu Kala Ka Itihasa,31.
510 A.V.III.12.
511. A.V.III.12.
512. A.V.III.12,6.
513. Ibid.

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hither the calf along with the other domestic animals, hither the vessel full of liquor, together with bowls of sour milk".[514] The house was made firm with the recitation of the mantras.[515] Then the house was sprinkled, mantras recited and special oblations offered to Vastoshpati. When the house was ready for occupation, the master and his wife entered the house with a pitcher full of water and with the immortal fire.[516] The Asvalayana Grhya Sutra speeks elaborately of the selection of the site and examination of the ground.[516a] It seems that many of the basic elements of the house building in the later periods were developed in Vedic times. With all these many details about the house-building activity and architecture of the Aryans of the Vedic age, it would not be correct to agree with Keith and Macdonell that 'very litle is known of the structure of the house',[517] There can be litle doubt that many of the basic elements of house-building evidenced in the historical times were developed during the Vedic age.

Significance of the word 'Pura' in the Vedas:

Fort planning in India dates back to the Vedic period. 'Pura' is an oft repeated word in the Rigveda, which has come to signify a 'rampart', fort' or 'stronghold'. The word 'Pura' occurs frequently in the Rigveda[518] and later.[519] It presumably

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514. A.V.III.12,3.5.7.
515. A.V.III.12,1.2.
516. A.V.III.12,8.
516a. Amita Ray, House-Building Rituals in Ancient India, J.N.Banerjea Volume, 305-8.
517. Vedic Index, I.230.
518. R.V.I.52,7; 58,8; 131,4; 166,8; III.15,4; IV.27,1, etc.
519. Taitt.Br., I.7,7,5; Ait.Br., I.23; II.11; Sat.Br., III.4,4,3; VI.3,3,25; XI.1,1,2.3; Chand., VIII.5,3, etc.

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means places of shelter or residence with strong walls or ramparts all round.The word 'Durga','hard to approach',also occurs in the Rigveda,sometimes in the sense of a 'fort', 'stronghold'.[520]It is synonymous with 'Pura'.Such fortifications show that they were sometimes of a considerable size , broad (prthvi),wide (urvi) and strong (sasvata).[521]The use of the terms prithvi or broad,and urvi or wide suggests that even in the Vedic times there were two kinds of forts.[522]Such fortifications were sometimes made of stone (asmamayi)[523]and also sometimes of iron (ayasi).[524] According to Keith and Macdonell the allusions to stone and iron are probably only metaphorical.[525] Perhaps all that is meant is that they were very strong. It is difficult to determine the exact sense of the word Pura in the Rigveda which later meant a town . It seems to have been an earth-work fortification,protected by palisada or stone wall.The frequent mention of the capture or descruction of such strong-holds indicates that they were numerous and scattered all over the country,and that they could be easily erected like the stockades made by primitive tribes all over the world. The Pura or earth-work fortifications may either have been part of the village or just out side it,to be resorted to intimes of emergency.The Rigveda refers to forts

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520. R.V. V.34,7;VII.25,2; Vedic Index,I.369.
521. R.V.I.189,2.
522. B.A.Salatore, Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions,430.
523. R.V.IV.30,20;Sat.Br.,III.1,3,11(Asama-pura).
524. R.V.I.58,8;II.20,8;IV.27,1;VII.3,7;15,14;95,1;X.101,8,etc.
525. Vedic Index I.538.

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'with a hundred wall'(Sata-bhuji).[526] It may suggest that the forts in the Rigvedic days were of considerable size. Tripura,[527] 'a threefold stronghold 'is alluded to in the Brahmanas as a secure protection.Keith and Macdonell thinks that these passages are mythical and no stress can be laid on them as evidence for the existence of forts with three concentric walls.[528] In certain passages ,these puras are called'autumnal'(Saradi).[529] It is possible that the forts,which are called 'automnal' (Sardih)[530] may be mythical ,but it is not assential,for the epithet may allude to their being resorted to in the autumn . By far the most probable explanation of this epithet is that it refers to the flooding of the plains by the rising of the rivers in the autumn when the cultivators and the herdsmen had to take refuge within the earth-works which at other times served as defences against human foes.[531] The Rigveda refers to dehi[532] which were probably earth-works or dikes and served as defences thown up against andenemy .These Puras were probably ramparts of hardened earth and sometimes consisted of an enclosure protected by a palisade consisting only of a hedge of thorn or row of stakes and were used as places of refuge against attacks in times of war.[533]

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526. R.V.I.166,8;VII.15,14;Vedic Index,I.538-38.
527. Sat.Br.VI.3,3,25;Ait.Br.,II.11;Kaus.Br.in Indische Studien, 2,310;Taitt.Sam.,VI.2,3; Kath.Sam.,XXIV.10,etc.
528. Vedic Index,I.329.
529. R.V.I.131,4;174,2;VI.20,10;Monier Williams,Sanskrit-English Dictionary,1066.
530. Cf.Macdonell,Vedic Mythology,60.
531. R.V.I.131,4;174,2;VI.20,10;Monier Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary,1066.
532. R.V.VI.47,2;VII.6,5;Cf.Schrader,Prehistoric Antiquities,344.
533. Cf.R.V.X.101,8;VIII.53,5;Vedic Index,I.539;The Vedic Age, 356.

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We have already alluded that Grama or village in the Vedic age was a 'secure' abode 'where the clan as village community lived. It was a sort of protected residence site into which cattle could be driven at night or toescape attack. The Atharvaveda refers to a 'Pura' full of cattle (Gomate).[534] It may suggest their self sufficiency showing that the forts were filled in with cattle, evidently to provide the defendants with food in case of a prolonged siege. Thus like village (Grama)the partifications (Pura) were ,perhaps ,also used to hold cattle.It seems that these Puras of the Aryans like the Anglo saxon boroughs arose primarily out of a military necessity. It was incumbent to build these ports (Puras)to resist invasions or to consolidate conquests. The siege of Puras is also referred to in the Samhitas and the Brahamanas.[535] The method of laying siege in the early Vedic age was perhaps by setting fire to the surrounding palisades or walls .[536] The Puras were besieged and invested (upa-sad) prabhid)[537] probably as a rule by blockade ,since the ineffective means of assault of the time would have rendered the storming difficult and expensive . The siege of forts is alluded to in the Samhitas and the Brahamanas. In the Satapatha Brahmana ,we have the following account of a siege "Now the gods and the Asuras, both of them

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534. A.V.VIII.6,23.
535. Taitt.Sam.,VI.2,3,1;Ait.Br.,I.23;Sat.Br.III.4,4,3-5;Goatha Br.,II.2,7,etc.
536. R.V.VI.16,39;VII.5,3.
537. Taitt.Sam.,VI.2,3,1;Sat.Br.III.4,4,3-5;Ait.Br.I.23,2,etc? Gopatha Br..,II.2,7.

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sprung from Prajapati,were contending against each other.The Asuras then built themselves castles in these worlds-an iron one in this world ,a silver one in the air,and a golden one in the sky.The gods then prevailed.They besieged them by these sieges (upasad); and because they besieged (ūpasad)them , therefore received the name upasads.They clove the castles , and conquered these worlds.Hence they say :'A castle is conquered by siege ';for it is,indeed ,by beleaguering that one of these human castles is taken."[538]

Although further prove is not available in regard to the nature of the three castles built by the Asuras ,yet the fact that the castles are mentioned,and their conquest by beleaguering is likewise described,proves that we have to date the construction of castles to the age of the Brahmanas.The explicit reference to one of them having belonged to men is a point that deserves special notice. At any rate iron castles 'in this world 'seems to have been a great improvement upon the Vedic castles which were probably built of sun-dried bricks, and which were gaurded by palisades and a ditch.Since fire is said to have been used in these sieges in the Rigveda the assumption is that the palisades were probably of wood.[539]

The Rigveda refers to Pura-Charishnu [540](lit.moving fort) which may be a sort of engine for assaulting strongholds.[541]

538-Sat.Br.III.4,3,8;S.B.E.,XXVI.P.105-6.
539. R.V.VII.5,3;Vedic Index,I.538-39.
540. R.V.VIII.6,2-8.
541. The Vedic Age,356.

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Hillebrandt [542] thinks that Pura-Charishnu of the Rigveda was a kind of chariot;it may like the Trojan horse-have been an Indian anticipation of the Roman means of assaulting a Fort.

Pischel and Geldner [543] think that these Puras were towns with wooden walls and ditches like Indian town of Patliputra known to Megasthenes [544] and the Pali texts.[545] However,as pointed out by Dr.A.Ghosh, in early Vedic literatue the word Pura did not bear any urban significance.[546] Vedic literature hardly seems to go beyond the village,no doubt with modification in the later period.Keith and Macdonell seem to agree with this view and hold that "the word Nagara is of late occurance.On the whole it is hardly likely that in early Vedic time city life was much developed."[547] This view is further supported by Zimmer[548] who compares the fact that neither the Germans [549] nor the Slavs [550] lived in towns,but kile the Ancient Indian,were scattered in villages,each consisting of the houses and steadings of the several families living in the village. The evidence seems pretty convincing.It istrue that the Greeks,when the first find them,evidentlyknew castles and fortresses of the mediaeval type;but the Greeks were clearly an invading race,super imposed on an older and in civilization more advanced people.[551]

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542. Vidische Mythologie, 3,289 n.
543. Vedische Studien ,I.XXII,XXIII.
544. Strabo,702;Arrian,Indica,10.
545. Mahaparinibbanasutta,P.12.Cf.Rhys Davids ,Buddhist India, 262.
546. Dr.A.Ghosh,The City in Early Historical India,45.
547. Vedic Index ,I.539.
548. AL.,142-145.
549. Tacitus,Germania ,16.
550. Procopius,De bello Gotico,III.14.
551. Burrows,Discoveries in Crete.

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But the Pura may,as Zimmer allows,have sometimes been built within the limits of the villages.According to Macdonell and Keith it would be probably a mistake to regard these forts as permanently occupied fortified places like the fortresses of the mediaeval baronny or that of the medieaval India.We cannot literally translate the word Pura as fort or fortress all i,e. probably meant as that the word stands for any place of residence or shelter,small or large,which was surrounded by high,wide and strong walls. These were presumably used as shelters against enemy attack,or against depredations of robbers and wild animals,perhaps also against inundations caused by over-flowing rivers.That is why the walls or fortifications were made of hardened earth with palisades and a ditch.[552]

On the basis of the above description it would be clear that the scholars have propounded three theories about forts which are the following:Professor Zimmer maintains that the palisades were no more than a hedge of thorns or a row of stakes;that the Pura may have been sometimes built within the limits of the villages;and that some of them like the Saradipur (autumanal forts) might have been built as a protection against autummal floods.[553] The first part of this theory does not seem to have been probable,since,as noted above,the evidence is more in favour of wodden palisades than in that

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552. Cf.Dehi;R.V.VI.47,2;VIB, 6,5;Schrader,Pre-historic Antiquities,344;Zimmer,AL.,143.
553. Zimmer ,AL.142-45;Vedic Index,first 1.539.

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of a hedge of thorns,or even a row of stakes.There is nothing improbable in the Puras being built within the limits of villages,since a Pura or a fort out side a village would have served no purpose.The suggestion in regard to autumnal forts is not improbable.The authors of the Vedic Index,while repeating Professor Zimmer's view concerning the autumnal forts, affirm that they belong to the Dasas; and that such forts were probably occupied in autumn by the Dasas against the Aryans.[554] As to why the Dasas should have occupied the autumnal forts only in autumn is not clear;in fact,a migration from one type of fort to another based on the Vagaries of the weather is both unhistorical and unreasonable.

Professors Pischel and Geldner considered the Puras as having had wooden wall and ditches .This is not unlikely when be remember that,even in comparatively later times,the great city of Patliputra was built of timbers.[555] But Professors Pischel and Geldner's contention of Puras as "towns" is 'hardly' susceptible of proof' and it is hardly likely that in early Vedic times city life was much developed.[556]

Professors Macdonell and Keith,as noted above,have favoured the following theory.They say that it would be a mistake to regard the forts with a hundred walls (Satabhuji) as "permanently occupied fortified places like the fortresses

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554. Vedic Index,I.538-39.
555. Rhys Davids,Buddhist India,262;Vedic Index,loc.cit.; Smith Oxford History of India,77-78.
556. Vedic Index loc. cit.

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of mediaeval barony .They were probably places of refuge gainst attack,ramparts of hardened earth with palisades and a ditch."

Whatever may have been the exact nature of the ancinet castles ,it is clear that the Vedic people certainly had the concept of castles.To expect the ancient Indians to have possessed the idea of the mediaeval European type is to pervert history.The later European anology being useless in this regard,there is no point in saying that the castles mentioned in the Vedic texts were merely places of refuge.If it is admitted that the forts in the Vedic age possessed cattle, and that they were made of dried brick and stone,we have to imagine that they were subject to warfare and to long periods of sieges .The theory that they were meant only as places of refuge cannot be sustained.

It is interesting to note that most of the Rigvedic references to Puras clearly associate them with the Dasas and the Dasyus.[557] These opponents of the Aryans called as Dasas or Dasyus were of dark complexion,flat nose and lived in fortified strongholds,[558] The Rigvedic civilization was essentially rural.People appear to have lived only in villages. It may be noted that Indra has been frequently eulogised as having destroyed Puras of enemies.[559] He is described as

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557. R.V.VIII.5,31.
558. R.V.II.20?;VIII.6,1-7.
559. R.V.VI.45,9;VI.22,6.

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Puramdara,[560] the Breaker of the Puras. This tends to prove that a city civilization was a thing of the past, and became legendary by the time the Vedic Aryans settled in north-west India. This inference gains ground from certain references in the Rigveda. Agni is stated to have ruined old Puras.[561] Again, Pipru, a foe of Indra[562] is mentioned as possessing Puras.[563] He is called a Dasa[564] as well as an Asura.[565] Indra is said to have shattered his strong-holds.[566] Indra also burst powerful strong-hold of Susna.[567] Another Pura named Urjayanti[568] in a passage of the Rigveda[569] is said to have belonged to Narmara. At one place Indra speeks of having destroyed seven Puras or strong-holds of enemies.[570] In another passage Indra is praysed as benificial like a 'Pura'.[571] Indra is also credited to have destroyed the Pura of Bala.[572] But the most prominent of these enemies was Sambara with whom Varcin was allied.[573] Indra has been stated to have penetrated one hundred old Puras of Dasyu Samabara.[574] He is called a Dasa.[575] His Puras, Ninety,[576] ninety-

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560. R.V.II.20,7; III.54,15.
561. R.V.VI.4,3.
562. R.V.I.101,1.2; IV.16,13; V.29,11; VI.20,7; VIII.49,10. X.99,11; 138,3.
563. R.V.I.51,5; VI.20,7.
564 R.V.VIII.32,2.
565. R.V.X.138,3.
566. R.V.I.51,5; VI.20,7.
567. R.V.I.51,11; VIII.1,28.
568. Ludwig, Translation of the Rigveda, 3,152.
569. R.V.II.13,8; Vedic Index, I.105.
570. R.V.VI.47,2.
571. R.V.VIII.80,7.
572. R.V.VI.18,5.
573. R.V.I.51,6; II.12,11; IV.26,3; VI.18,8; VII.18,20, etc.
574. R.V.II.14,6, Sambara is called a Dasa which is justified by the Rigvedic Hymn, VI.26,5.
575. R.V.VI.26,5.
576. R.V.I.130,7.

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nine,[577] or a hundred [578] are alluded to. The strong-holds shattered by Indra are occasionally described as Krsna-garbhah, 'bearing black (people) in the womb.[579]" Sambara held many Pura strong-holds, being enemy of Divodasa-who brings us to the historical stratum of the R.V. That is, we now read of struggles between human protogonists, not of gods against demons. Divodasa had no city, nor did any of his descendants, as far as Vadic information goes."[580] These references may indicate that the powerful pre-Aryans or contemporary non-Aryans used to live together in strong-holds made of brick, iron[581] or other hand-material. Indeed, everywhere in connection with the exploits of Indra, the Puras of Dasas and Dasyus figure prominently and repeatedly, so much so that it seems permissible to credit the pre-Aryan Dasas and Dasyus with the origin and use of fortifications in a large scale, so far as Indian civilization at any rate, is concerned. "Even if purah be used for villages or hamlets, this proves the Dasyu's civilized life. They were not living in caves, as is suggested by some from the meagre references, which most probably describe their condition after their defeat at the hands of the Aryans."[582]

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577. R.V.II.19,6; VII.99,5; VI.47,2, Cf. X.49,8.
578. R.V.II.14,6.
579. D.D.Kosambi, An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History, 94 Cf. R.V.IV.16,13.
580. Ibid., 88-89.
581. R.V.VII.3,7.
582. P.C.Basu, Indo-Aryan, Polity in the Rigvedic Period, 50.

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"The common Dravidian word for village is ur, which enters into so many names, as Nellore (Nal-ur), Vel-ur.... Ur probably referred to a fortified place or even a town ; Indeed the origin of the word may have gone that to the early time when some place of refuge would have been the natural centre of each village group."[583] The word Pura seems to have been derived from the dravidian Ur and from what we read in the Rigveda about Puramdara's[584] exploits in connection with the destruction of the ninety-nine Puras of the Asuras who had been causing havoc to the gods seem to refer to the Puras of the Indus valley pre-Aryans.[585]

Some three or four decade ago these puras of the Dasas and Dasyus were considered to have been mere figments of imagination of the composers of the Rigveda. It was supposed that they were; merely places of refuge against attack, ramparts of hardened earth with palisades and a ditch.'[586] The excavation of Indus Valley sites have changed the picture. Excavations at the Indus Valley sites of Harappa and Mohenjodaro by Sir Mortimer Wheeler have unearthed strong and massive fortification built of hardened earth and mud bricks, with high, strong and wide ramparts, that used to encompass the well-planned, elaborate and sophisticated cities of the Indus Valley.[587]

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583. Baden Powell, the Indian Village Community, 74-75.
584. R.V.II.7, 20; III.54, 15.
585. Stuart Piggot, Pre-Historic India, Ch.VII. P. 260-269.
586. Vedic Index, I. 356, 539.
587. R.E.M. Wheeler, Harappa, 1946: the Defences And Cemetry R.37, in Ancient India, No. 3, 1947, P. 61-74.

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Scholars are of the opinion that pre-Aryan civilization in India was over-whelmed by powerful invaders-the Vedic Aryans who were more vigorous and better equipped. It was presumably the Indus Valley that witnessed prolong fight between the early Vedic Aryans and the Pre-Aryan Dasas and Dasyus. Suggestion has been made that the intruders in this region 'may belong to the Aryan invaders.'[588] According to Sir Mortimer Wheeler, "The Aryan invasion of the Land of the Seven Rivers, the Punjab and its environs, constantly assume the form of an onslaught upon the walled cities of the aborigines.... Here we have a highly evolved civilization of essentially non-Aryan type ;[589] known to have employed massive fortifications, and known also to have dominated the river system of north-western India at a time not distant from the likely period of the earlier invasions of that region."[590] Both literary and archaeological evidences that are at our disposal seem to suggest that the Puras said to have been destroyed by Indra, called Puramdara , Destroyer of

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588. Childe, New Light on the Most Ancient East (1934), P.223, The theory of destruction of Indus towns and cities by invading Aryans should now be discarded in the light of the fast accumulating evidence of natural causes such as floods, tectonic disturbances and changing river courses which forced the Harappans to leave to safer places and to readjust themselves when they came in contact with other chalcolithic folk in the north and Neolithic-Chalcolithic people in the south; S.R. Rao, Lothal (1955-62) Memoirs of the Archaeological survey of India, No.78 , P.260.

589. Sir John Marshall, Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization, I, 110.

590. R.E.M. Wheeler, Harappa, 1946: The Defences And Cemetry R.37, in Ancient India, No.3, 1947, P.82.

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Forts,in the Rigveda,may well have been the fortified cities of the Indus Valley civilization.[591]" At three sites in Sind, on the top of the ruined and deserted Harappa towns or villages, settlements were found which contained evidence of the arrival in the region of new peoples with an alien and more barbaric way of life than that of the complex urban pattern of Harappa. There is little evidence that similar folk came to Mohenjodaro in the days of its decline,and at Harappa ,as at Chanhu-daro in Sind,there was a final occupation of people building rough huts on the top of the ruins of the defences and structures of the citadel,and burying their dead in a cemetery dug into the rubbish-tips of the deserted city."[592]" The discovery of fortified citadels at Harappa and Mohenjodaro,supplemented by the already identified defences of the Harappan sites at Sutkagen-dor in Makran,Ali Murad in Sind and others of more doubtful period have changed the picture .Here we have a highly evolved civilization of essentially non-Aryan type,now known to have employed massive fortifications,and known also to have dominated the river systems of north-western India at a time not distant from the likely period of the earlier Aryan invasion of that region.... In the last phase of Mohenjodaro,men,women and children were massacred in the streets and houses,and were left

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591. Piggat,Prehistoric India,260,262,269;R.E.M.Wheeler, Harappa,1946:the Defences and CemeteryR.37,in Ancinet, No. 3,1947,P.82-83.
592. Piggot,Prehistoric,India,Ch.V.P.142-43.

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lying there or,atleast,crudely covered without last rites. On the circumstantial evidence such as these,considered in the light of the chronology as now inferred ,Indra stands accused.[593] This ppinion will further be strengthened if Hariyupiya[594] comes to be identfied with Harappa where the pre-Aryan advanced Indus Valley civilization is believed to have flourished. Sayana is not definite about the meaning of the word Hariyupiya in the Rigveda.According to him it may refer to a city or river.[595] Hillebrandt[596] thinks that it is the river Iryab (Haliab),a tributary of the Kurum (Krumu),but this is not at all probable.[597] Ludwig takes Hariyupiya as the name of a town on the river Yavyavati.[598] Following him D.D.Kosambi remarks that at Hariyupiya Indra is described to have shattered"the remnants of the Vrcasikhas like an earthen pot,crumpling up their front line of a hundred and thirty panoplied warriors of the Vrcivats whereat the rest fled,giving the victory to the king Abhyavartin Cayamana .It is not clear whether this fight on the Yavyavati (Ravi)river was between Aryans and pre-Aryans or two Aryan tribes .The former is more likely,as nothing is heard thereafter of the Vrcivats ,whereas Abhyavartin Cayamana's people did survive in thatt region. Certainly ,the written tradition and the archaeological record match very well here."[599]

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593. R.E.M.Wheeler,The Indus Civilization,97-99.
594. R.V.VI.27,5;JBORS.March 1928 P.129-30;Journal of Bombey Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,Vol.26,1950P.56.
595. Vedic Index,II.499.
596. Vedische Mythologie,3,268,n.1.;Cf.Zimmer,AL.,18,19.
597. Vedic Index,II.499.
598. Ludwig,Translation of the Rigveda,3,158.
599. D.D.Kosambi,An Introduction to The Study Of Indian History, 68.

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It has been stated by Sir Mortimer wheeler that "there is a possibility, rather not an impossibility, that in the modern place name may be recognised the Hariyupiya which is mentioned one in the Rigveda as the scene of the defeat of the Vrichivants by Abhyavartin Cayamana."[600] This view has also been endorsed by Dr.B.B.Roy[601] and Dr. R.C.Majumdar.[602] It may also be pointed out that at Harappa, the top layer of occupation is distinctly foreign, as is the associated cemetery H, first tentatively identified by V.G.Childe as Aryan.[603] Again Narmini[604] in the Rigveda may be an epithet of Pura, 'fort'. There is the possibility that the city narmini mentioned as lighted up by the fire-god Agni was burnt down (as Ludwig would have it in his translation and analysis of the Rigveda), hence might be Mohenjodaro. Cities as such are not a Rigvedic phenomenon at all, and only these two are named. When centuries later, new cities grew up, they were unplanned growth from villages without drainage, or regular lay out, and in completely new localities. The early Vedic Aryans were pastoral and agricultural people and they do not seem to have had any experience of the kind of complex and elaborate urban civilization as represented by the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa. Remains of walled

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600. R.E.M.Wheeler, The Indus Civilization, 20.
601. JBORS, March, 1928, P.129-30.
602. An Advance History of India, 26.
603. Childe, New Light on the Most Ancient East (1934), P.223.
604. R.V.I.149,3, Vedic Index, I.447.

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fortifications have also been unearthed at Ali Murad and Kohtras Bulhe by the late Mr. N.G.Majumdar. They also belong to chalcolithic period.[605] it has been pointed out that whereas at Harappa and Mohenjodaro the fortifications were made of hardened earth, at Kohtras Bulhe ,Majumdar unearthed a long rampart wall of irregularly dressed but fairly large stone blocks. These fortifications may explain the asmamayi Puras described in the Rigveda which may presumably surrounded by stone walls.[606] The forts destroyed by Indra are said to be of stone, or with the epithet ama, which may refer to unbaked,(raw)brick walls.[607] 'Stone bulworks' are also referred to in the Rigveda.[608]

That the Puras of those days consisted to a great extent of mud and mat hovels is quite probable; they do so still but that they consisted of those exclusively, is contradicted in several places. In one passage the Puras of Sambara are said to have consisted of stone, in another the same Puras are indicated by the appellative dehyah, the plastered, intimating the use of lime, mortar or stucco.[609] An idea of what such stone Puras looked like in a smaller scale may presumably be had from the remains of what is known as Jarasandha-ka-baithak at Rajgir. "That this monument is the earliest structure of stone in India, there can be no doubt.[610] Nor can there be any doubt as to its original purpos

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605. N.G.Majumdar ,Exploration in Sind, in the Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No.48.P.89-90.
606. R.V.IV.30,20.
607. Stuart Piggott, Prehistoric India, 261-62.
608. R.V.I.56,6; Vedic Index, I.523.
609. Wilson's Rigveda, III.P.XIV.
610. J.Marshall, Rajgriha and its Remains, in the Annual report of the archaeological survey of India, 1905-6, P.86-106.

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of serving as a watch tower,'the small chambers near its base providing shelters for the gaards'.It is 'in the form of a large rectangular plateform 85 ft.by 81 ft.at the base ,and 81 ft. 6 in.by 78 ft. at the top,and 22 ft. to 28 ft.high. It is built of large unhewn blocks of stone set in the rock without any mortar and contains near the base several small regular shaped cells on all sides.... Its walls,like those of the rectangular bastions of the outercity walls of old Rajgir, have a slight batter.'[611]

Just as we find references to not only Grama but also Maha-grama ,[612] similarly the Puras of the early Vedic age seem to have developed into Mahapuras[613] in the subsequent period.. It may denote a great fortress.Probably the only difference between the Pura and the Mahapura was its size.Even during the early Vedic age some of the Puras must have been fairly big in size.The forts supported by a thousand coloumns[614] and provided with a thousand door[615] are referred to in the Rigveda. Puras with a hundred enclosures or fortifications referred to in the Rigveda[616] may suggest the idea of forts consisting apparently of a series of concentric walls as actually existing at that time.Kathaka Upanisad[617] refers to ekadasa-dvara as an epithet

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611. A.Ghosh,Guide to Rajgir,14-15.
612. Jaiminiya Upanisad Br.,III.13,4.
613. Taitt. Sam.,VI.2,3,1; Kath.Sam.,XXIV.10;Mait.Sam.,III.8,1; Ait.Br.,I.23,2; Gopatha Br.,II.2,7.
614. R.V.II.41,5;V.62,6.
615. R.V.VII.88,5.
616. R.V.I.166,8;VII.15,4.
617. Kathaka Upanisad,III V.1.

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of Pura.A nava-dvarapura ,[618] 'the citadel of nine doors' is referred to in the Svetasvatara Upanisad .It may be from these large size Puras that the cities of the subsequent ages must have developed.So far as the Aryans in the early Vedic age are concemmed presumably they were not city-builders.City -building was not a social activity in which Aryans could be regarded proficient.Again to quote D.D.Kosambi,"Indra is 'the' breaker of cities '(Purambara),but neither Indra nor any follower of his is described as builder or possessor of a city.None of them ever construct anything of masonry.The word for brick ista does not occur in this Veda ,only in later ones,where the bricks were first used only for building sacreficial altars.The standered settlement is a Grama,which continued to mean village,while it could ween denote an over-night encampment.... They failed to start new cities of their own,which could hardly be of any use to pastoral raiders."[619] It has , therefore,been suggested that town planning and city-building as organized and recognised social activities were adopted by the later Aryans from the civilized pre-Aryans and non-Aryans like the peoples of the Indus Valley.That is why,it seems that, in the Brahmanical caste system architects,builders,sculptors etc.along with other craftsmen are always listed low down in the social scale.

As regards the administration of the Puras we have

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618. Svetasvatara Upanisad,III.18.
619. D.D.Kosambi,An Introduction To the Study Of Indian History,89.

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little information in this regard. The word Pur-Pati,lord of the fort,occurs only once in the Rigveda[620] and refers to his good rule or administration. The term may denote a regular office,[621] similar to that of the Gramini:the Pura would then be a permanently occupied settlement.The expression may,however, merely mean the chief over a fort when it was actually occupied against hostile attack. The rarity of the word seems to favour the latter sense.[622]

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620. R.V.1.173,10.
621. Cf.Sayana's note on R.V.1.173,10; Muir,Sanskrit Texts, 5,456; Cf.Ludwig,Translation of the Rigveda,3,204.
622. Vedic Index,II.13-14.

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CHAPTER - II

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

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THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Since primitive institutions hardly admit of any attempt at differentiation of functions ,social and political,there can be no correct appraisal of their nature unless we examine their various aspects in inter-relation with one another.Therefore we cannot attempt to concentrate only on the purely political aspect of village in the Vedic Age.as an independent and isolated phenomenon.To avoid traversing the same path which has been done by others,we shall here study only some of the political institutions of the Aryans which will help us to understand the rural polity of the Vedic age.

Tribal state of society: It is generally recognized that in the early stage of social develppment most institutions were tribal in nature. We have already referred to the nomadic and migratory state of the Rigvedic people,who were engaged in perpetual warfare for the possession of cattle. This seems to have necessitiated the formation of a defensive and offensive union of men and women. This is indicated in the Vedic literature by terms such as Kula or Kulpā,Grāma, Viś, Jana, Gaṇa etc. We shall study these terms occuring in the Vedic texts so far as they have a bearing on the political or administrative organization of the village in the Vedic age.

Family (Kula) : Family may be regarded as the lowest tribal unit of the Vedic Aryans. In the earliest stages of the history of a nation, family is the only form of social association when the state has not grown. Amongst the early Vedic Aryans the unit of social formation was the family comprising several members living under a common head, the father, or elder brother, called the Kulapa.[1] The earliest Indo-Aryan family as revealed

1. R.V. X.179,2.

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in the Rigveda was of patriarchal type. The head of the family was its rural. The father and the Grihapati[2] are seperately mentioned showing that the father was not necessarily the head of the family.[3] The joint family under the guidance of the chief of the family was the universal rule amongthe early Vedic Aryans.[4] The joint family must have been fairly big.[5] Collateral descendants from a near common ancestor, or even wife connections were some times inculded in the family. The exclusiveness of the Aryan family was its marked characteristic.[6] 'The house of each man was to him what the den is to the wild beast which dwells in it; something, namely, to which he only has a right, and which he allows his mate and his offspring to share, but which no other living thing may enter except at the risk of life'[7] Chronic hostility to all outsiders, as well as exigencies of self defence, which gradually, though perhaps very slowly led to the aggrégation of families of the same blood.After the death of the father the family bonds must have been considerably weakened. Even after the seperation from the Central family,each family must have settled in close proximity to each other for purposes of co-operation which is so essential for agricultural pursuits. It was necessary for defence against wild animals also. The Vedic village was indeed an aggregate of several such families.[8] The Grama was

2. R.V. VI.53,2; A.V. XIX.1,51; XIX.31,13; Sat.Br. IV.6,8,5; VIII. 6,1,11.
3. P.C.Basu,Indo-Aryan Polity in Rigvedic period,1.
4. R.V. X.85; A.V. III.30.
5. R.V. I.51,3; II.17,1; X.103,7 etc.
6. John,B.Phear The Aryan village in India and Ceylon,241.
7. Cox's Greece,13.
8. R.V. I.44,10.

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probably made of tittle knots of houses of the several branches of one family (Kula)!"[9] "The village was at first ,and still is in a large degree,a group of such families often all sprung from or appendent to a Central family:"[10]

The Kulapa[11](lit.house protector),or chief of the family, is mentioned in the Rigveda as inferior to and attendant on the Vrajpati[12] in war,the latter being perhaps the leader of the village contingent of the clan.[13] Zimmer thinks that this refers to the head of the families being subordinate in war to the village headman,the Gramini.[14] Thus Vrajpati is identified with the Gramini,so that the headman of the village was attended in war by the heads of families of the same village. "Thusit would be the same as the division of the host according to the division of the curies in the Roman army of the earlydays"[15] It is impossible to deny the significance of the connection between the Vrajpati and the Kulapa. The family (Kula) may be regarded as the lowest unit with Kulapa as its chief.

The village as a political unit:

Professors Macdonell and Keith hold that the village (Grama) "can hardly be said to have been a political unit."[16] However if the expression"political unit"connotes administrative unit, it may not be possible to agree with their opinion. It may be

9. The Vedic Age,356.
10.Jhon B.Phear, The Aryan Village in India and Ceylon,234.
11.R.V. X.179,2.
12.R.V. X.179,2=A.V.VII.92,2; Vedic Index II,341.
13.Vedic Index I,171.
14.AL,171; Vedic Index 341.
15.P.C.Basu,Indo Aryan Polity in Rigvedic Period,81.
16.Vedic Index. I,246.

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noted that the king's share in a village is referred to as early as the Atharvaveda.[17] It can be understood only if we regard the village as an administrative unit. Further, it may be pointed out that the use of the word Ksetra (field) in the Rigveda points clearly to the existence of separate fields carefully measured off.[18] This would have no significance if the villages were not an administrative units. Both could have been done only by an authority higher than that of the villagers themselves. The king's share in the villages, however, strongly belies the assumption of the ownership of a whole village by the villagers themselves. It may also be pointed out that Gramini,the head of the village, who is met with in the Rigveda[19] and in the later Samhitas and Brahamanas,[20] was ranked, as in the following pages of the Satapatha Brahmana,with the Rathkaras,the charioteers,as one of the Ratnins or jewels of the royal establishment. It clearly indicates that the Gramini was either a popularly elected, or self styled,official,or an officer of the king. The following is the relevant passage in the Satapatha Brahmana:"The Suta hands it (the sacrificial wooden sword) to the Gramini (village Headman), 'with Indra's thunderbolt: (therewith serve me.' Thereby the Suta makes the headman to be wealtheir than himself:[21] Here the statement "makes the headman to be wealthier than himself"has to be studied alongwith the previous statement that in the same context in which we are informed that,when the Brahman,by means

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17. A.V. IV.22,2.
18. R.V. X.33,6. Cf. III.31,15;V.62,7.
19. R.V. X.62,11;107,5.
20. A.V. III.5,7;XIX.31,12;Taitt.Sam.II.5,4,4;Mait.Sam.I.6,5; Kath.Sam.VIII.4;X.3;Vaj.Sam.XV.15;XXX.20;Taitt.Br.I.1,4,8; 7,3,4;II.7,18,4;Sat.Br.III.4,1,7;V.4,4,8;VIII.6,2,1;Brih. IV.3,37.38,etc.
21. Sat.Br.V.4,4,18.

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of the thunderbolt made the king to be weaker than himself, "indeed, the king who is weaker than a Brahman, is stronger than his enemies;[22] thereby he (the Brahman) makes him (the king) stronger than his enemies." On the same analogy it can be said that the Suta by handing over Indra's thunderbolt to the Gramini, made the latter stronger than the Gramini's enemies. This passage is enough to prove that the Gramini was not only of the same status and importance as the Suta or governor, but of sufficient importance in the hierarchy of state officials appointed by the king. Macdonell and Keith also support the assumption when they opine that the" Gramini's connection with the royal person seems to point to his having been a nominee of the king rather than a popularly elected officer".[23] Again, it may be argued that the Gramini was often connected with the Senani, or the royal general-who was one of the ratnins of the king-[24] it follows that he was reckoned as one of the state officials. Thus village was clearly an administrative unit in the political organization of the Vedic age. The Yajurveda[25] refers to Gramya-Vadin which according to Macdonell and Keith apparently means a 'village judge'.[26] It indicates that village(Grama) was regarded as a unit of administration for judicial purpose also.

22. Sat.Br.V.4,4,15.
23. Vedic Index, I.247.
24. R.V.VII.20,5; IX.96,1; X.84,2; Taitt.Sam.I.8,9,1; Taitt.Br.I. 7,3,4; Mait.Sam.II.6,5; IV.3,8; Kath.Sam.XV.4; Sat.Br. V.3, 1,1.
25. Taitt.Sam.II.3,1,3; Kath.Sam.XI.4; Mait.Sam.II.2,1.
26. Vedic Index, I.248.

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Further,it may be said that Satapati,occuring in the Samhita and Brahman literature means "Lord of a Hundred Villages." According to Macdonell and Keith, to"interpret the expression as the 'lord of a hundred gods;as does the commentary on the Taittiriya Brahman,is obviously impossible. It seems clear that there is a reference to an analogous human functionary -viz.,the lord of a hundred villages,known in the later law-who was probably atonce a judicial deputy of the sovereign and a revenue collector, an ancient magistrate and collector."[27] The existence of this official may further strengthen the argument in favour of the village as an administrative or political unit under the king.

Vis: This term appears in the Vedas in more than one sense. It meant a "settlement",or a"subject" or a "people" or a "subdivision of a people"[28]Professor Macdonell had once taken the word Visah in the sense of"district"[29]Later on he seems to have revised his openion and alongwith Keith he held that "Vis is an expression of some what doubtful significance."[30]They again wrote that the term"Vis appears in a more special sense of a subdivision of the Jana or whole people."[31] They further remark that the "division

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27. Vedic Index II.351.
28. R.V. IV.3,4;37,1;50,8;V.3,5;VI.8,4;21,4;48,8;VII.56,22;61,3;70,3;104,18;X.91,2;124,8;173,6; A.V. III.4,1;IV.8,4;22,1.3; Maitt.Sam.III.2,8,6; Vaj.Sam.VIII.46;Sat.Br.I.8,2,17;IV.2,1,3;V.3,3,12;V.4,2,3; X.6,2,1; XIII.6,2,8; Kaus. IV.12,etc.
29. Macdonell,SanskritLiterature,158.
30. Vedic Index II.305.
31. Ibid., R.V.II.26,3,where it is opposed to jana,janman,and putreh;X.84,4 where in battle Visam-Visam apparently refers to divisions of the host(Cf. also IV.24,4 Viso yudhmah); X.91,2 where it is opposed to grha and jana;XIV.2,27,where grhabhyah is followed by asyai sarvasyai vise,which must mean a division less than a whole people.

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of the jana into several Vis may be regarded as probable, for it is supported by the evidence of another passage of the Rigveda,[32] which mentions the Vis as a unit of the fighting men, and thus shows that, as in Homeric times and in ancient Germany, relationship was deemed as a principle of military arrangement." Hopkins[33] also regarded 'Vis' as a subdivision below the tribe or Jana."This is, however not common, for in most passages one or the other of the above senses given above is quite-possible." Zimmer equates Vis with tribe[34] He mainteince that Grama was a clan, standing between the family and the tribe which according to him, was the Visah.[35] On the basis of a passage in the Rigveda[36] he said that the people were devided into cantons (Visah), cantons into joint families or clans, or village communities (Grama, Vrijana), and these again into single families. He thought that the later four divisions of society or reflected in Jana , Visah, Janman and putra or sons, and each village community was originally founded on relationship.[37] Zimmer, however admits that neither Grama[38] or Vrijana[39] has the special meaning of a subdivision of the Visah when used for war , both words only denoting generally and armed host.[40]

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32. R.V. X.84,4; IV.24,4; V.61,1; VI.26,1; VII.79,2; VIII.12,29- but it need not necessarily bear the sense. But in X.91,2 there is a clear contract between Vis and Jana.
33. Religions of India, 27.
34. Vedic Index, I.306; Zimmer, AL, 159, 160.
35. Vedic Index I.245.
36. R.V.II.26,3.
37. Zimmer, AL, 159; Vedic Index I.269.
38. R.V.III.33,11.
39. R.V.VII. 32,27; X.42,10.
40. Zimmer, AL, 161; Vedic Index, I.269.

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Macdonell and Keith do not agree with Zimmer and remark that "it is very doubtful whether this precise division of the people can be pressed."[41] Again to quote Macdonell and Keith:[42] "The division of the Jana into several Vis may be regarded as probable, for it is supported by the evidence of another passage of the Rigveda[43] which mentions the Vis as a unit of fightingmen." But what definitely violates the theory of Prof. Zimmer is the fact in the Rigveda, there is a clear contrast between the Visah and Jana .[44]

Again, it is very difficult to ascertain the relationship between Vis and Grama. The division of Vis into several Gramas is very doubtful.[45] It may be pointed out that in the Rigveda[46] house (grha)is contrasted with Jana and Vis. In another passage[47] adhvara or family sacrifice is contrasted with the Jana or Vis rather than, as Zimmer[48] thinks ,the village with two larger units.[49] Zimmer[50] himself admits that neither Grama[51] nor Vrjana[52] has the special sense of a subdivision of the Vis when used for war, for both words only denote generally an armed host.

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41. Vedic Index I.269.
42. Ibid.
43. X.84,4.
44. X.91,2;Vedic Index I. 269.
45. Ibid.
46. X.91,2.Vedic Index 270 n.17.
47. R.V.VII.32,1.
48. AL.435.
49. Vedic Index II. 271.
50. AL. 161.
51. R.V. III.33,11.
52. R.V. VII.32,27;X.42,10.

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It may be noted that Vis in many passages of the Rigveda[53] denotes a fighting unit similar to the fighting groups of kinsmen in Homeric Greek and ancient Germany. Since both Vis and Grama are fighting group of men exact difference between the two can not be ascertained . It may also be pointed out that in the Rigveda Vis occurs 170 times but Grama figures only 13 times so the division of Vis into Grama can not be forcefully pressed. Further such a division can be presumed if we can prove that Vis was a political or administrative unit in the Vedic age. Much in this regard depends on the interpretation of the word Vispati. Vispati with political or administrative functions have relevance only when Vis was a political unit. Zimmer interprets Vis in one passage[54] as the lord of the canton in which case Vis can be regarded as an administrative unit. But he himself admits that except one reference in the Rigveda[55] there is no other passage requiring this sense. Even the one quoted by him is atleast indecisive.[56] In majority of passages the word simply means the 'lord of the dwelling', whether used of a man or of the god Agni as the house holder par excellence ,or possibly as the fire of the Sabha or assembly house of the people. This sense suits even the passages of the Rigveda[57] in which the Vispati, as well as the father and the mother of a maiden,are to be lulled to

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53. R.V. X. 84,4; IV. 24,4; V.61,1; VI.26,1; VII.29,2; VII.12,29.
54. R.V. I. 37,8.
55. R.V. I.37,8.
56. Vedic Index II.308.
57. R.V. VII. 55,5; A.V. IV.5,6.

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sleep in order to allow her lover to approach her, for the household may well be deemed to have been a joint family , in which the Vispati could easily be different from the father of the girl-e.g.,a grandfather or uncle.[58] In Taittiriya Samhita[59] where Vis clearly means the people or subject class and Vispati as their chief representative,we cannot from such a passage infer the formal office of Vispati even as head of the Vis.It may also be pointed out that if we except that Vispati had any political function we will have to accept that tribal states of the Vedic age usedto be quite big in area. In the later Vedic texts we come across Satapati,[60] the lord of a hundred villages, who must have had primarily political functions as an officer.[61] To presume an officer like Vispati with political functions would mean that he must havebeen over and above Satapati ,lord of hundred villages . Proper interpretation of Vispati cannot be ascertained unless it is clear whether the kingdom of a rural was big ot small. If it was very extensive in area we can have no objection that Vispatis must have had political functions. This assumption is not reasonable in view of the fact that tribal states of the Vedic age were quite small. Thus Vis can not be proved as a political unit in the Vedic age. It is therefore impossible to state in what exact relation the Grama in Vedic times stood to the Vis or to the family(Kula or Gotra).The confusion is increased by the vagueness of both the terms

58. Vedic Index I. 308.
59. Taitt. Sam.II. 3,1,3.
60. Ma-it. Sam.IV. 14,12; Taitt.Br.II.8,4,2. Vedic Index II.351.
61. P.C.Basu ,Indo Aryan Polity in Rigvedic Period,81.

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Grama and Vis.If the latter be regarded as a local division, then no doubt the Grama must have been a part of a district, but if Vis was a unit of relationship then Grama may have contained families of different Vises or may, have some times coincided with Vis or have contained only a part of a Vis.

It is also important to note that in the later Vedic age the division of the people into Jana still exists and in presupposed but the division into Vis disappears.[63]

In the Vedic texts Vis in most cases denotes 'people! Rigveda refers to 'Aryan people'[64] or the 'divine people'[65] or the 'Dasa people'; and so on.[66] In one passage[67] the Vispati as 'lord of the subject people'(Visam) may be taken as a king.[68]

Visah are also mentioned with sabandhavah or relatives.[69] It is possible that Vis may in some cases have been no more than a Gotra.[70] On the basis of the later literature comprising the Brahmanas,[71] and the Samhitas,[72] Macdonell and Keith suggest

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63. Vedic Index I. 271.
64. R.V. X.11,4.
65. R.V. III.34,2; A.V.VI. 98,2; Cf.Vaj.San.XVII.86.
66. R.V. IV.28,4;VI.25,2; VIII. 96,15; VII. 5,3.etc.
67. A.V. III.4,1;IV.22,3. perhaps R.V.III.13,5,is also to be taken;Cf.VII.39,2. Vedic Index II.308.
68. Vedic Index II. 308.
69. A.V. XV.8,2.3; Cf. XIV. 2,27 and R.V. X.91,2.
70. Vedic Index II. 306.
71. Panca.Br. XVIII.10,9;Sat.Br.II.1,3,5; VIII.7,2,3; XIII.2, 2,17.19;9,6;XIV.1,3,27etc.Chhand.VIII.14;Vedic Index II. 307. n. 1.
72. Taitt. Sam. II.2,11,2;Mait.Sam.II.1,9;III.3,10; Kath.Sam. XIX.9.

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that the term Visah may be interpreted to mean the peasantry.[73] It may have not only represented the peasantry but all those who lived by trade as well.[74] In view of the opinions narrated above one thing that stands out clearly is that Vis cannot be taken to denote a subdivision of the Vedic tribal state. There are passages in the Rigveda[75] where it is doubtful what exactly is the idea conveyed by the word Vis. Sanskrit root Vis means to 'enter' or to 'settle'. In many passages of the Rigveda [76] the lost consistent meaning can be gathered only by interpreting it as settlement or dwelling. Mr. N.C. Bandyopadhya[77] holds that 'Visah' having originated from the word 'Vis', to settle, meant the settlement of the Aryans. Thus when interpreted etemologically 'Vis' may suggest the settlement of the Aryans, the Grama. However, in the Vedas this word is used with distressing vagueness and has so many signification. But at any rate we can say that 'Vis' did not denote a political unit. It was essentially not a political but a human unit whose precise nature cannot be ascertained.

Jana: In the Vedas Jana may indicate 'tribe' as in the case of Panca-janah or the five tribes, referred to frequently in the Rigveda and the Yadava-Janah or the tribes of the Yadus, etc.[78] The king is described as 'protector' of the people (Janasya),[79] and there are other references to king and Jana.[80]

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73. Vedic Index II. 307, n. 12.
74. B.A. Salatore, Ancient Indian Political Thought And Institutions, 413.
75. R.V. IV. 4, 3; IV. 37, 1; V. 3, 5; VI. 21, 4; VI. 48, 8; VII. 56, 22; VII. 61, 3; VII. 70, 3; VII. 104, 18; X. 91, 2. etc.
76. Ibid.
77. Hindu Polity and Political Theories, 52.
78. R.V. VII. 6, 46. 48.
79. R.V. III. 43, 5; IX. 35, 5.
80. R.V. V. 58, 4.

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In a political sense Jana as a tribal unit, constituted a state. In a passage of the Rigveda the Bharata Jana are called gavyan gramah.[81] Hopkins thinks that here Jana is used as a synonym of Grama.[82] According to Macdonell and Keith Grama has in the present context, 'merely a general application'.[83]

We have already seen that Grama was a political unit while the nature of Vis cannot be ascertained as a political unit. So we can safely suggest that collection of so many villages must have constituted the tribal state of the early Vedic age. This assumption is reasonable in view of the fact that in the later days[84] we come across Satapati, the lord of a hundred villages, who must have had primarily political functions as an officer. Thus the administrative organization was essentially rural in conception and the Vedic state can be described as a rural kingdom. There is no evidence in the Vedasof large kingdom or any significant development of urban life.[85] Even in the later Vedic age when territorial element had asserted itself and the Jana or tribal state had assumed the form of Janapada or territorial state the rural character of the kingdom had not changed in any remarkable manner. In this period political Janapadas were being formed and each Janapada had its capitals, but the excavated remains are not those of even a township. "Evidently the rulers of the early janapadas had headquarters

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81. R.V.III.33,11.
82. Religions of India, 26, 27.
83. Vedic Index I. 269.
84. Mait.Sam.IV.14,12; Taitt.Br.II.8,4,2.
85. John.W.Spellman, Political Theory of Ancient India, 130.

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at places that were not very different from rural settlements, at best relatively larger."[86] Dr.A.Ghosh does not agree with Wheeler that civic life in recognizable form began at Hastinapur in the painted grey ware lebels, that the culture represented by that ware was urban and that urban life began in doab in about 1000 B.C.[87]

Village Officials.

A.Gramini: The head of the village was called Gramini or leader of the Grama. According to Dr.K.P. Jayaswal the "Gramini was the keystone of the village constitution."[88] The local administration was entrusted to the Gramini or the village chief. In the Gramini, it would appear, the relationship which developed between the state and the people found an exact expression.

The earliest reference to the Gramini is met with in the Rigveda.[89] He is often referred to in the later Samhitas and the Brahmanas .[90] On the basis of the material available in the Vedic literature the exact meaning of the title is not certain. But from the information regarding the Gramini which is available at our disposal it seems that he played an important role in the political life of the period.

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86. A.Ghosh, The City in early Historical India, 11.
87. Ibid.n.27; Wheeler, Civilization of the Indus Valley and Beyond, London, 1966, 98.
88. Hindu polity, 16.
89. R.V.X.62,11; 107,5.
90. A.V.III.5,7; XIX.31,12; Taitt.Sam.II.5,4,4; Mait.Sam.I. 6,5.(Grama-nithya, 'the rank of Gramini': Cf.Taitt.Sam.VII. 4,5,2); Kath.Sam.VIII.4; X.3; Vaj.Sam.XV.15; XIX.20; Taitt.Br. I.1,4,8; 7,3,4; II.7,8,14; Sat.Br.III.4,1,7; V.4,4,8; VIII.6, 2,1(Gramanithya); Brih.IV.3,37.38 etc.

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In the Rigveda the Gramini is said to be the donor of a thousand cows and the prayer is that he,called the Manu, may never suffer wrong and may his liberality go spreading in glory with the Sun.[91] In this hymn of Rishi Nabhanedhishtha the liberality of Raja Savarni is the subject;thus the leader seems to be identical in this case,atleast,with the headman of the village. According to Zimmer,[92] the Gramini is regarded as having had military functions only,and he is certainly often connected with the Senani,or 'leader of an army! But Macdonell and Keith do not agree with this view and remark that "there is no reason to restrict the sense:presumably the Gramini was the head of the village both for civil purposes and for military operations."[93] Thus we can presume that in the countryside things were managed by the village headman called Gramini. Originally functioning as the leaders of tribal regiment they were transformed into a village headman when the tribal contingent settled down to agriculture.

In a passage of the Rigveda [94] we are told that the head of the village goes in front (at the sacrifice) bearing dakshina of the priest. From this the communal character of some atleast of the religious institution is suggested and in these the headman represented the village. This passage nullifies Zimmer's attempt to confine the functions of the Gramini to military ones only. However,as we shall see in the following pages if the Vrajapati is to be identified with the

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91. R.V.X.62,11.
92. AL.171.
93. Vedic Index I.247.
94. R.V.X.107,5;Cf.R.V.X.179,2=A.V.VII.72,2.

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Gramini,there is no reason to deny that atleast in the early Vedic age his functions were probably more military than civil. "The Gramini was originally not the head of the village,but of tribal unit called Grama.He cannot be identified with any official whose title may suggest any territorial administration."[95]

During the age of the Somhitas and the Brahmanas the administrative system of the Aryans became more elaborate. It seems that the importance of the office of the Gramini considerably increased during the period. In the Satapatha Brahmana[96] he os ranked as inferior to the Suta,or charioteer, as one of the ratnins or jewels of the royal establishment. It would suggest that the Gramini was either a popularly elected,or selfstyled,official,or an officer of the king. The relevant passage in the Satapatha Brahmana[97] is as follows: "The Suta,or the Governor,hands it(the sacrificial wooden sword) to the Gramini (village headman).'With Indra's thunderbolt:therewith serve me 'Thereby the Suta or the Governor,makes the headman to be wealthier than himself."[98] Here the statement "makes the headman to be wealthier than himself "has to be studied alongwith the previous statement in the same context in which we are informed that,when the Brahmana,by means of thunderbolt,made the king to be weaker than himself,"indeed,the king who is weaker than a Brahmana,

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95. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India.266-67.
96. Sat.Br.V.4,4,18.
97. Sat.Br.V.4,4,18; Vedic Index 1. 247.
98. Sat.Br.V.4,4,18.

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is stronger than his enemies :thereby he(the Brahmana)makes him (the king)stronger than his enemies."[99] On the strength of this assertion it might be said,that the Suta,by handing over Indra's thunderbolt to the Gramini,made the latter stronger than the Graminis enemies. It clearly proves that the Gramini was not only of the same status and importance as the Suta or Governor, as professor Eggeling calls him-an official who is described in the Vedic Index as a charioteer.[100] but of sufficient importance in the hierarchy of state officials appointed by the king.Professor Macdonell and Keith seen to support this assumption when they remark that the "Gramini's connexion with the royal person seems to point to his having been a nominee of the king rather than a popularly elected officer."[101] But the same authorities maintain that the post may have been sometimes hereditary,and sometimes nominated,or elective,there being no evidence in this regard . According to Rhys Davids [102]the Gramini must have been an official elected by the village council,because the appointment is only claimed for the king in late authorities like Manu.[103] However according to V.M. Apte,"the Gramini seems to have been often a nominee of the king rather than a popularly elected officer,and probably the post was hereditary in such cases."[104] whether the post of the Gramini was hereditary,and

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99. Sat.Br.V.4,4,15.
100.Vedic Index I.247.
101.Ibid.
102.Buddhist India,48.
103.Manu,VII.115.
104.Vedic Age,451.

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whether the officer was nominated by the king or elected by the village council, can not be definitely stated. The varying local customs make it likely that all these modes of appointment in the case of a Gramini were current in different parts of the country.[105]

In the Atharvaveda[106] the Gramini is included among the Upasthis (dependents) who according to Macdonell and Keith "were the clients proper of the king, not servile, but attached in special relation to him as opposed to ordinary population" and included among them ambitious men who sought advancement in the royal service.[107] besides the Gramini others included in the Upasthis were chariot-makers (rathakara), the smiths (taksan), and the charioteer (Suta). That the Gramini was an important officer is also corroborated by the fact that he is mentioned with the Suta or charioteer and Pratyenas, who was a police officer, in the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad.[108] His high position is further suggested by the fact that in the Taittiriya Samhita[109] he is ranked with the learned Brahamin and the Rajanya.

The position and importance of the Gramini may further be emphasised on the basis that he is enumerated in the list of the king-makers called Raja-kartr[110] or Raja-krt[111] about

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105. The Vedic Age, 487, 488.
106. A.V. III.5, 6.7.
107. Vedic Index I.96.
108. Brih. IV.3, 43.44.
109. Taitt. Sam. II.5, 4, 4.
110. Ait. Br. VIII.17, 5.
111. A.V. III.5, 7; Sat. Br. III.4, 1, 7; XIII.2, 2, 18.

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whom we are told that though 'not themselves kings'[112] aid in the consecration of the king. The Gramini had a voice in the election of the king. "The meters act as attendants about him (Soma);even as the non-royal king-maters,theh heralds (Suta) and headmen (Gramini),(attended upon)the king,so do the meters at as attendants about him,"[113] Thus in the Satapatha Brahmana[114] the persons meant and specified are the Suta,'charioteer'or heralds,and the Gramini,'the village chief',who,according to Eggeling,was probably a representative chief from the village nearest to the place of consecration.[115] The Gramini of the village where the royal residence was situated was specially honoured and influential.[116] No doubt,there must have been many Graminis in a kingdom but the texts seem to contemplate only one as in the royal entourage.[117] Prof. Eggeling seems to suggest that the Gramini was a hereditary territorial proprietor living in the capital.But there is nothing to show that always lived in the capital. Still the kingdoms were not so large as to render the movement of the rulers difficult in their respective states.

The Gramini was included among the Ratnin mentioned in connection with the coronation ceremony.[118] There is a ceremony

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112. Loc.cit.
113. Sat.Br.III.4,1,7;S.B.E.Vol.XXXI. 87.
114. Sat.Br.III.4,1,7; XIII.2,2,18.
115. S.B.E.,41,60,n;Vedic Index II.210.
116. Vedic Index I. 247.
117. Eggeling,S.B.E.,41,60 n;Hopkins,Journal of the American Oriental Society,13,96.
118. Taitt.Sam.I.8,9,1 et Seq;Taitt.Br.I.7,3,1et Seq; Sat.Br. V.3,1,1. et seq.

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connected with the Rajasuya sacrifice known as "Ratna havis." It was a prelude to the actual consecration or anointing ceremony. In this ceremony the king designate goes to the house of each king-maker or Ratnin and offers an oblation at his place in honour of a particular deity. They are called Ratnins because they are like precious gems in the royal crown. The nucleus of the king-makers which had swelled in bulk in the later Vedic age is met with in the Atharvaveda which mentions only five Ratnins viz-Rathakara, Karmara,or artisan,Gramini , the village headman and other comprising nobles,chieftains, subsidiary kings and relations of the king elect. The Satapatha Brahmana [119] enumerates the order of the king-makers following which the king goes to their houses.In the order of precedence among these eleven Ratnins the Gramini is given fifth place in the Satapatha Brahmana. Alongwith the Gramini these elevin Ratnins are serially arranged according to their status in the following manner- Senani,Purohita,Mahisi,Suta,Gramini.Kshattr, Samgrahitr,Bhagadugha, Aksavapa,Govikartana and Palagala. Identical list is enumerated in the Taittiriya Samhita,[120] Taittiriya Brahmana[121] and Maitrayani Samhita [122] with slight variations .In the Satapatha Brahmana[123] we are told that the king treats with Havi the headman of the village because "he assuredly is one of his jewels and it is for him that 'he is thereby consecrated.'The Maitrayani Samhita [124] states that

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119.Sat.Br.V.3,1,1 et seq.
120.Taitt.Sam.1.8,9,1 et seq.
121.Taitt.Br.1.7,3,1 et seq.
122.Mait.Sam.II.6,5;IV.3,8.
123.Sat.Br.V.3,1,6.
124.Mait.Sam.IV.3,8.

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'these (king-makers)are the limbs of the king,and the kingdom of that king whose Ratnins are vigorous also become vigorous ! Further it may be noted that in the Pancavimsa Brahmana[125] the Gramini is listed among the eight Viras,'heroes'(constituting his supporters and entourage)as among the friends of the king, others being brother,son,Purohita,Mahisi,Suta,Ksattr and Samgrahitr.

The Gramini is referred to in the Taittiriya Brahmana as belonging to the Vaisya caste.[126] This was one of the highest post to which a member of that class could aspire. The aim of the Vaisya's ambition was,according to the Taittiriya Samhita[127], to become a Gramini,or village headman,a post probably conferred by the king on wealthy Vaisyas of whom no doubt there were many. We are told that the Vaisya,who,if attained it,was at the summit of prosperity(gatasri).[128] It seems that during the later Vedic age the Gramini,as a Ratnin,was a high functionary of the state and was selected on the principle of class and caste representation. Dr.R.S.Sharma gives another explanation of the term vaisya-gramini in the two Samhitas referred to above.[129] He thinks that it"indicates that he (the Gramini)was the head of the people(Vis)living in the village."[130] However there is no evidence at all that the Gramini were real caste in the sense that they were endogamic in the early Vedic age.[131] The

125. Panca.Br.XIX.1,4.
126. The Vedic Age,431.
127. Taitt.Sam.II.5,4,4.
128. Ibid.; Mait.Sam.I.6,5.
129. Mait.Sam.I.6,5;Taitt.Sam.II.5,4,4.
130. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India,136.
131. Vedic Index,II.266.

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Satapatha Brahmana refers to Sajata of a Gramini.[132] But in the Vedic literature [133] Sajata may only mean a relative or a man of the same position or rank. However this may indicate the high social position of the Gramini.

On the basis of the scanty material available at our disposal it is very difficult to determine the exact function of the Gramini. In the later Vedic age in all probablity he still continued the original practice of leading tittle groups of people to the battle field, in addition to which functions of a general supervisory nature over the villagers may have also been entrested to him. Dr. K.P. Jayaswal[134] has described the Gramini as 'the head of the township.' We have reasons to doubt that urban life had developed on any considerable scale even during the later Vedic age. Further it has been suggested that royal dues were received through the Gramini.[135] But this function was performed by the Bhagaduha, who like the Gramini is mentioned in the list of the Ratnins.[136] Therefore the suggestion of collection of royal dues through Gramini is not tenable.

According to Zimmer[137] the Gramini also presided over the village assembly. Macdonell does not agree with this view.[138]

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132. Sat.Br.V.4,4,19.
133. R.V.I.109,1;A.V.I.9,3;19,3;II.6,4;III. 3,6; VI.5,2;73,1; XI.1,6.7;Taitt.Sam.II.1,3,2;2,1,2;6,9,7;Mait.Sam.II.1,8; Kath.Sam.XI.12,13;XII.1;Vaj.Sam.V.23;X.29;XVII.5.
134. Hindu Polity,202.
135. G.n.I.I,117.
136. Sat.Br.V.3,1,1,et.seq; Taitt.Sam.I.8,9,1,et.seq.;Taitt. Br.I.7,3,1,et.seq.
137. Zimmer,AL.174 quoted in Dr. R.C.Majumdar's Corporate Life in Ancient India,124,n.2;Vedic Index II.427.
138. Vedic Index II. 427.

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He points out that the evidence of Satapatha Brahmana[139] and Chandogya Upanisad[140] clearly shows that the King went to the sabha just as much as to the Samiti. Zimmer has not adduced any passage to show that the Gramini presided over the sabha, which according to him was a village assembly. Dr. K.P. Jayaswal seems to suggest that the Samiti of the Vedic age was based on some principle of representation and the town and the village were perhaps represented by its Gramini.[141] But the available evidence in this regard does not support this suggestion .XM

Thus in the polity of the Vedic age the Gramini occupied a position of great importance."The Gramini proper or par-excellaence,who was one of the kings entourage,was probably regarded as representing rural interests in the ministry just as the industrial interests were represented by the Karmara, the military by Senani,Rathakara, and Suta,and financial by the Samgrahitri and Bhagadugha."[142] He was the main channel of royal authority,being entrusted with local administration. During the later Vedic age his powers and functions tended to be more civil than military in nature.He must have discharged military duties in times of war only and mostly civil duties in times of peace."In the days of the Brahmana he seems to have occupied the same post in the village as the sheriff in the Shire before Henry II,discharging both civil and military functions."[143]

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139. Sat.Br.III.3,4,14.
140. Chand.V.3,6.
141. Hindu Polity,15.
142. R.K.Mookerjee,Hindu Civilization,104.
143. P.C. Basu,Indo-Aryan Polity in Rigvedic Period,28.

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V.P.Apte suggests that there "were probably grades of Graminis according to the size of the Grama."[144] However, he has not adduced any evidence in support of his contention. Macdonell[145] thinks that references to Satapati in the Vedic texts[146] may indicate "the lord of a hundred villages, known in the later law-who was probably at once a judicial deputy of the sovereign and a revenue collector, an ancient magistrate and collector." H.C.Roychaudhary[147] points out that in Prasna Upanisad Adhikrta was a village officer appointed by the king. Reference to these village officials may suggests beginnings of a regular system of provincial administration.[148] Tracing the village lord from peoples man to official leisured grandee, Dr. A.M.Bose remarks: "In the Vedic texts village headmen (Gramini, Gramika) are styled Rajakartr and Ratnin aiding in consecration of the king among certain other functionaries and are consulted by the king alongwith his ministors. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad the king is received by Graminis alongwith Ugras, Pratyenasas and Sutas who keep the guest house ready with food and drink (4.3.37).... During the days when kingship had not yet outgrown the tribal stage, the village chiefs were communal representatives and exerted a wholesome check on royal absolutism. But later records synchronise with the growth of a centralized monarchey fortified by a buresucratic machine strike a different note .... They gradually sank down from the headship of autonomous villages to sleeping lords with irresponsible powers and vested previleges or were transformed into king's officers

144. The Vedic Age, 431.
145. Vedic Index. II. 381.
146. Mait. Sam. IV. 14, 12; Taitt. Br. II. 8, 4, 2.
147. An Advance History of India, I (1958), 45.
148. Ibid., 44.

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and absorbed into an official heirarchey .Even as early as in the Upanisadas the king is found appointing adhikrtas over gramas(Prasna Up.III.4);such appointment tallies with the conception of civil polity and paramount sovereignty...."[149]

B.Vrajapati: Vrajapati is referred to in the Rigveda.[150]It is said Vrajapati used to be attended by the Kulapas. The Kulapas were the chiefs of the family so that the heads of the families used to go to war under the leadership of Vrajapati .Zimmer[151] thinks that Vrajapati was the leader of the village contingent. He identifies him with the Gramini. Thus it would be the same as the division of the host according to the division of the curies in the Roman army of the early days. We have already seen in the preceding pages that the Gramini as the head of the village had originally military functions to perform. So it seems quite reasonable to identify Gramini with Vrajapati.[152] According to R.S.Sharma ,"Vrajapati ,who was incharge of the pasture grounds held in common by the tribe and who naturally led family heads to battle for capturing cows,became later identical with the Gramini."[153]

However Whitney [154]does not agree with this view.He puts another interpretation that Vrajapati denotes merely a chieftain surrounded by the heads of families. Macdonell and Keith also endorse his view.[155]"But the question arises who

149. A.N.Bose,Social and Rural Economy of Northern India,I,75-76.
150. R.V.X.179,2.
151. AL.171;Vedic Index,II.341.
152. The Vedic Age ,356.
153. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India,266.
154. Translation of the Atharvaveda,436.
155. Vedic Index,II.341.

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could be this chieftain? The proper explanation of this seems to be the identification of the Gramini with Vrajapati in times of war . It may be remembered,by the way ,that the word Vrajapati also establishes its connection (in its etymological meaning) with the house,so that he was the head man somewhere and the fact of his leading the Kulapas or heads of families offers the irresistible temptation to identify him with the leader of the clan,families of the same stock."[156] In the Rigveda Vraja may denote pasture for the cattle.[157] The Vrajapati as an incharge of the pasture ground might have been an important village official in the early Vedic age because ,as we have already seen,cattle played an important part in the rural life of the Aryans in the Vedic age.

C. Purpati: The 'pur'or forts did not have any urban significance in the Vedic age.as we have already seen the 'pur' or forts might sometimes be built inside the village. The word Purpati,'lord of the fort'occurs only once in the Rigveda[158] and refers to his good rule or administration. According to Macdonell and Keith the term denotes a regular office,similar to that of the Gramini.The Pur would then be a permanently occupied settlement.They further suggest that Purpati might have been the chief over afort when it was actually occupied against hostile attack. The rarity of the word seems to favour this sense.[159]

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156. P.C.Basu,Indo-Aryan Polity in Rigvedic Period,83.
157. R.V. II.38,8;X.26,3;97,10;101,8.
158. R.V.I. 173,10.
159. Vedic Index,II.14.

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D. Satapati: We have already seen that Vis cannot be taken as a political unit in the Vedic age. The Vedic state was a vast rural kingdom consisting of several villages, In the later Vedic age when the smaller communities coalesced into larger units the territorial basis of the state became clearly evident. In Maitrayani Samhita[160] and Tauttiriya Brahmana[161] the term Satapati occurs as an epithet of Indra, who is described as alone the 'lord of a hundred' among men. According to Macdonell and Keith, to interpret the expression as 'lord of a hundred gods' as does the commentary on the Taittiriya Brahmana, is obviously impossible. They suggest that it seems clear that there is a reference to an analogous human functionary -Viz., the lord of a hundred villages, is known in the later law-who was probably at once a judicial deputy of the sovereign and a revenue collector, and ancient magistrate and collector.162 This designation of "Satapati ","Lord of a Hundred villages" may, according to H.C.Roychaudhury ,suggest the beginnings of a regular system of provincial administration.[163]

E. Adhikrta: He is referred to in Prasna Upanisad. He may be regarded as a village officer appointed by the king.[164]

F. Gramyavadin: He is erred to in the Yajuraveda.[165] Macdonell and Keith suggest that he was a "village judge".[166] Petty offences in the village seen to have been left to the Gramyavadin or

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160. Mait.Sam.,IV.14,12.
161. Taitt.Br.,II.8,4,2.
162. Vedic Index,II.351.
163. H.C.Roychaudhury,An Advance History of India,I.(1958),44.
164. Prasna Upanisad,III.4;H.C.Roychaudhury,An Advance History of India,45.
165. Taitt.Sam.,II.3,1,3; Kath.Sam.,XI.4;Mait.Sam.,II,1,2.
166. Vedic Index,I,248.

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"village judge"for disposal.[167] Macdonell and Keith hold that the "Sabha" of the Gramyavadin referred to in the Maitrayani Samhita may have been his"court".But Dr. Salatore does not accept the interpretation of "Sabha" as "court"of the Gramyavadin given by the learned authors of the Vedic Index.[168] He thinks that it was his advisory council.[169] The office of Gramyavadin suggests that we can look upon the village in the Vedic age as a unit of judicial administration of the country .

The Village Assembly.

Since ancient times,the Aryans as a race seem to have exhibited an innate desire to settle their social,religious or political questions in an assembly of their own. The Greeks had their Areopagus,the Romans their Curia; and Anglo-Saxons their Witanagemot. Similarly the Aryans in India had their assemblies. Throughout the whole of the Rigveda from the earliest mandala down to the latest we find very frequent references to words meaning assembly.Some of them are further alluded in other Samhitas and Brahmanas. In his pre-eminent study Hindu Polity,Dr. K.P. Jayaswal remarks that "from the Vedas we find that national life and activities in the earliest times on record were expressed through popular assemblies and institutions."[170] That these earlier assemblies were associations of kinsfolk bound by ties of blood or of local contiguity there can be no doubt,since all over the world,especially in the

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167. The Vedic Age,434.
168. Ancient Indian Political Thoughts and Institutions,646.
169. Ibid.,421.
170. Hindu Polity,12.

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ancient time,the ties of blood and residence in a locality seem to have played an important part .In the present context we have to see how far these assemblies such as Sabha,Samiti and Vidatha were related to the rural life of the Vedic age . In fact our information regarding different types of assemblies is so scanty,sketchy and sparse that in the present state of our knowledge it is very difficult to have complete or wholly accurate under standing of these institutions. A widely diverse number of ideas have been put forth on these assemblies. Due to the obscurity of the texts and their inconclusive interpretations by different scholars it is necessary to discuss them in detail before ascertaining the relationship of these institution with the rural life of the age .

The Sabha: Of the councils and assemblies of ancient India,Sabha and Samiti seems to have had the most attention from scholars.Of these we shall first select the Sabha and ,then, the Samiti for discussion on the ground that the Samiti is sometimes mentioned with the Sabha,[171] thereby suggesting that the latter term had a claim to priority .

Sabha is aften mentioned in the Rigveda[172] and other Vedic texts.[173] Sometimes it is difficult to ascertain whether it means the assembly or the hall of the assembly. It may denote both the

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171. A.V.VII.12,1;VIII.10,5.6;XIII.1,56;XV.9,2.3.
172. R.V.VI.28,6;VIII.4,9;X.34,6. Cf.Sabha-Sana,'eminent in the assembly',X.71,10.
173. A.V.V.31,6;VII.12,1.2; VIII.10,5;XII.1,56; XIX.55,6; Taitt. Sam.I.7,6,7; Mait.Sam.IV.7,4; Vaj.Sam.III.4b;XVI.24; XX.17; Taitt. Br. I.1,10,6; Sat.Br.II.3,2,3; V.3,1,10; Kaus.Br.VII. 9,etc.

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people in conclave and the hall which was the venue of their meeting. In the Rigveda[174] the Sabha appears as a hall used for gambling "presumably when the assembly was not transacting public business !"[175] The term Sabha-sthanu,"pillar of the assembly hall,"because of the constant presence of the dicer in the Sabha[176] leads us to postulate that the Sabha denoted a hall. The Yajurveda[177] refers to the sin being committed in the village,the forest or the Sabha,which evidently appears here in the sense of some place."The hall also served ,like the Homeric ἀγορή ,as a meeting place for social intercourse and general conversation about cows and so forth,possibly for debates and verbal contests."[178] If we agree with the view of Macdonell and Keith just quoted above that the term Sabha was a hall used, in addition to gambling,for the transaction of public business of various kinds,then besides the term Sabha-sthanu others such as Sabheya,[179] and Rayih-sabhavan[180] receive additional significance in the sense that they help us to postulate the view that Sabha was used for public purposes of various kinds."This assumption receives further support when we note that there were terms like Sabha-pati,[181] " lord of the assembly"; Sabhapala,[182] "Gaurdian of the assembly hall," Sabhasad,[183] "sitter in the

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174. R.V.X.34,6;A.V. V.31,6; XII.3,46 (where dyuta is used in place of Sabha)
175. Vedic Index, II.426.
176. Vaj.Sam.,XXX.18;Taitt.Br.,III.4,16,1.
177. Vaj.Sam.III.45;XX. 17.
178. Vedic Index,II.426.
179. R.V.II.24,13.Cf.I.91,20; A.V. XX.128,1; Vaj.Sam.,XXII.22,etc.
180. R.V.IV.,2,5.
181. Vaj.Sam.XVI.24;Taitt.Sam.,IV.5,3,2; Kaith.Sam.,XVII.13,etc.
182. Taitt.Br.,III.7,4,6.
183. A.V.III.29,1; VII.12,2; XIX.55,6.

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assembly", and Sabhacara [184] "assessors" or "judges"(of the Sabha)-all of which lead us to infer that Sabha or hall where the assembly met had assumed greater status since the days of the Rigveda,when only gambling and ordinary conversation might have taken place in it;and that in the age of the Samhitas and the Brahmanas,it was the place where more serious business pertaining to the public life of the people was transacted."[185]

As regards the antiquity of the Sabha,it alongwith Samiti is described as the twin daughters of god Prajapati.[186] According to Dr. R.K. Mookerjee ,it indicates 'that they were the original and earliest institutions of Indian polity ."187 It seems that the Sabha owed greater antiquity than the Samiti. According to Macdonell and Keith "women did not go to the Sabha,[188] for they were,ofcourse,excluded from political activity ."189 However,a late passage from the Rigveda refers to women as Sabhawati, worthy of going to the Sabha,which shows that women members attended this body.According to Dr.R.S.Sharma,"Since the practice obtained in only very primitive assemblies the association of women with the Sabha indicates its greater antiquity,which also suggested by the fact that in contrast to the term Samiti the term Sabha has several corresponding words in Indo-European languages."[190] To point out the antiquity of

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184. Vaj.Sam.XXX. 6;Taitt.Br. III.4,2,1.
185. B.A.Salatore,Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institution ,391.
186. A.V. VII.12,1.
187. Hindu Civilization,104.
188. R.V.II.24,13. Cf.I.91,20; A.V.XX.128,1; Vaj.Sam.XXII.22 etc.
189. Vedic Index,I.427.
190. Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, 96.

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Sabha ,Hopkins has compared it with the German sippe.[191] The word Sabha (Cf.Indo European s(u)ebho) is derived from a root closely associated with Old European sub (b),Old High German Sipp(e)a, Gothic sibja,and Mid German sippe-all meaning an association of the kin,tribe ,family or the clan.N.C.Bandyopadhyaya suggests that the early Sabha in India also were of the type.[192]The primitive character of the Sabha is also seen by the homely nature of its functions."Like a primitive assembly which does not know of any differentiation of functions,members of Sabha debated over the domestication of cattle,played dice and offered prayers and sacrifices."[193]Further it may be pointed out that unlike Sabha,Samiti seems to be an institution of developed society.In the Rigveda references to the Samiti are to be found only in portions which are considered to be the latest.[194].

Professor Ludwig[195] maintained that the Sabha was an assembly not of all the people,but of the Brahmins and Maghavans. Macdonell and Keith[196] hold that this view can be supported by the expression sabheya ,'worthy of the assembly',applied to a Brahmin,[197] rayih Sabhavan,'wealth' fitting for the assembly,'[198]

191."Position of the Ruling Caste etc.", JAOS,XIII.148.
192. Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories ,110.
193. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India,97.
194. K.P.Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,14.
195. Translation of the Rigveda,3,253-256.He quotes for this view R.V.VIII.4,9;X.71,10.(Passages which are quite vague) Cf.also R.V.VII.1,4; A.V. XIX.57,2.
196. Vedic Index,II.426-27.
197. R.V.II.24,13. Cf.I.91,20;A.V. XX.128,1;Vaj.Sam.,XXII.22,etc.
198. R.V.IV.2,9.

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and so on. A passage from the Rigveda speaks of sabheya vipras, which shows that the Sabha was attended by priests."The term Maghvan[199] indicates the gemerous giver of bounties to priests.[200] Their inclusion in the Sabha may signify that it was not an exclusive body of priests. Ludwig has cited several passages from the Rigveda to prove the high social status of members of the Sabha. A passage refers to the votaries of Indra,who are rich in horses ,chariots and kine ,and who receive wealth and go the Sabha.[201] another passage refers to the prominence conferred on members of the Sabha(Sabhasada) by Yasas.[202] The term Sabha -saha,[203] "eminent in the assembly" indicates that people were keen to gain prominence in the assembly .However , in these contexts there is nothing which may violate the theory that Sabha was an assembly closely related to village .

Bloomffeld[204] thought that Sabha was used for a domestic purpose and not as an assembly. This view cannot be maintained. In the Samhitas and the Brahmanas certain passages definitely indicate Sabha as an assembly hall.

Hillebrandt seems to maintain that Sabha and Samiti cannot be distinguished and that Sabha was used for sacrificial purposes. He saw in Agni "of the hall"(sabheya) a trace of the fire used in sacrifice on behalf of the assembly when it met.[205] He holds that the reference to well-born(Su-jata)[206] men being

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199. R.V.I.31,12;II.6,4;27,17;V. 30,4; 42,8; VI. 27,8,etc.
200. Vedic Index. II.118.
201. R.V.VI.11,427.
202. R.V.VIII.4,9.
203. R.V.X.71,10.
204. Journalof the American Oriental Society,19,13.
205. Hillebrandt,Alfred,Vedische Mythologie,P.2,123-25;Vedic Index. II.427.
206. R.V.VII.1,14.

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there in session is to the Aryan as opposed to the Dasa or Sudra, not to one class of Aryan as opposed to the other.[207] But it may be pointed out that it is difficult to entertain ~~in~~ the view that Sabha and Samiti cannot be distinguished because of the statement in the Atharvaveda relating to the two daughters of the Prajapati.[208] Further, it may be argued that in every Aryan house there was a separate place, the central hall, where the sacred fire was kept. Therefore the view that the Sabha (hall) might have been used for a sacrificial fire does not hold good.

According to Zimmer the Sabha was the meeting place of the village council, presided over by the Gramini.[209] The composition, nature and function of the Sabha was different from the Samiti. Zimmer has adduced philological argument in favour office contention.[210] Further, Dr. R.C. Majumdar points out that a clear distinction has been made inapassage of the Atharvaveda,[212] "Let both Assembly (Sabha) and gathering (Samiti), the two daughters of Prajapati, accordant, favour on me."[213] In another passage of the Atharvaveda Sabha is distinguished from Samiti.[214] There is thus no doubt that these two bodies were quite different, although the exact nature of the distinction between them cannot be ascertained.

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207. Vedic Index, II.427.
208. A.V. VII. 12,1; VIII.10,5.6; XIII.1,56; XV.9,2.3; Vedic Index, II.430; Kane, H.C.D. III.92.
209. Zimmer, AL.174; Vedic Index, II.427.
210. Ibid., 171.
211. Corporate Life in Ancient India, 109.
212. A.V. VII.12,1.
213. Atharvaveda Translated by Whitney (H.O. Series), 346.
214. A.V. VIII.10,5-6.

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"The fact that Sabha was also used as a place for amusement may indicate that it was originally a village council, which, as Zimmer suggests, served, like the Greek Leskhe, as a meeting place for social intercourse and general conversation about cows and so forth, possibly also for debates and verbal contests."[215] Macdonell and Keith point out that there is no evidence to show that Gramini presided over the Sabha.[216] The evidence of Satspatha Brahmana and Chandogya Upanisad indicates that the king went to the Sabha just as much as to the Samiti.[217] But the reference in the Chandogya Upnisad, etc., may be explained by supposing, either that the significance of the term had been extended in later times, or that it was not unusual for the kings to visit even these local councils. It is also a noticeable fact that in all the instances quoted above to establish the importance of the Assembly, it has been denoted by the term Samiti, while Sabha is mentioned in connection with village in two passages in Vajasaneya Samhita.[218] Dr. R.S. Sharma hold that mention of the Sabha alongwith the village and aranya in several collections of the Vajus cannot be taken to denote close association of the Sabha with the village. "If that be so it can be as well equated with aranya and can be described as an assembly of the forest."[219] But Dr. Sharma's contention seems to be based on wrong analogy. We cannot associate

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215. R.C.Majumdar, Corporate Life in Ancient India, 110.
216. Vedic Index, II.427, n.12.
217. Sat. Br., III.3,4,14; Chand., V.3,6,
218. Vaj. Sam., III.45; XX.17; Corporate Life in Ancient India, 110.
219. R.S. Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, 108.

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assembly of men (Sabha) with a secnuded place like forest.

According to Dr. A.S.Altekar the "Sabha was primarily the village social club,but a few items of the simple village government of the age were also transacted there by its members," like the steps for communal safety and decisions in the matter of village disputes. He concludes that the "balance of available evidence,however,tends to show that the Sabha was usually the village assembly,meeting for social as well as political purposes."[220] Dr.R.Shamasastry holds that "during the Vedic period there were in addition to the grand assembly of the state minor assemblies formed by each class for settling its own social or religious questions.... It is probable that even during the Vedic period the same practice of settling their affairs either by themselves or by the king in his assembly was followed by the Aryans. It is improbable,if not impracticable, that each of the many villages,constituted a kingdom of the Vedic period was compelled to go to the grand assembly in the capital town of the king for the settlement of its questions. It is therefore likely that numerous references[221] to the Sabhas or assemblies found in the Vedic literature are not merely to the single king's assembly in the capital town,but to minor village assemblies also".[222]

According to Dr. K.P. Jayaswal the Sabha was a popular

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220. A.S.Altekar,The State and Government in Ancient India, 97-98.

221. R.V.VI.28,6;VIII.4,9;X.34,6;X.71,10;A.V.V.31,6;VII.12,2;VIII.10,5;XIX.55,6;Taitt.Sam.I.7,6,7; Taitt.Br.I.1,10,6;Sat.Br.II.3,2,3; V.3,1,10;Vaj.Sam.III.45;XVI.24;XX.17 etc.

222. R.Shamasastry,Evolution of Indian Polity,74.

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body.[223] "Prayer for cooperation in the Sabha shows that discord in the Sabha assembly was as much disliked and dreaded as in the Samiti. The Sabha is called narishta which Sayana explains as a resolution of 'many' that cannot be broken or violated. 'Hence from the inviolability the name is derived.'.... Free discussion was thus held in the Sabha, and a resolution of the Sabha was considered binding on all and inviolable."[224] He further writes that the Sabha was probably a standing and stationary body of selected men working under the authority of the Samiti.[225] As regards the political character of the Sabha as described by Dr. Jayaswal it may be stated that the earliest references do not give prominence to the political character of the Sabha. References to dicing and gambling in the Sabha[226] as also its association with popular practices of witchcraft and magic [227] would rather suggest it to be a local village assembly. The Sabha discussed pastoral affairs. It debated over the domestication of cattle, dwelt on the excellence of the kine [228] and expressed anxiety for the fattening of the lean cattle. It showered praises upon the kine and recalled their vigour with gusto in the meeting.[229] We have already alluded to the semi-nomadic pastoral stage of the Rigvedic Aryans.

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223. K.P.Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, 18.
224. Ibid., 19.
225. Ibid.,
226. R.V.X.34,6.
227. R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, 98.
228. R.V.VI.28,6.
229. A.V. IV.21,6.

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Some sort of permanent collective dwelling for purposes of domestication of animals as well as agriculture led to the evolution of village. Therefore the discussion of pastoral affairs in the Sabha would strongly suggest that the Sabha was primarily a village assembly .

Further, it may be pointed out that the Sabha had its president called Sabhapati.[230] He was definitely different from the King who also some times attended the Sabha in Vedic times . Sabha with Sabhapati as its president might have been a village assembly and different from one attended by kings in the capital towns on whose deliverations the king used to preside in later times. Chandogya Upanisad[231] indicates that the king maintained his own Sabha. Satpatha Brahmana[232] describes Soma as an over-lord holding a court, to which underkings are flocking together. It seems that during the later Vedic period the Sabha sank into a narrow body and corresponded to the king's privy council and court, by a process analogous to that which gave rise to the witenagemot in place of the folkmoot in the Anglo Saxon constitution.[233]

According to Dr. N.C. Bandyopadhyaya[234] the early Sabha were the type of associations of the kinsfolk. Subsequently it became not only and association of kinsfolk, but of men bound together by ties of blood or of local contiguity. The Sabha was

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230. Vaj.Sam., XVI.24; Taitt.Sam., IV.5,3,2; Kath.Sam.XVII.13, etc.
231. Chand.V.3,6; VIII.14,1.
232. Sat.Br.III.3,3,14.
233. U.N.Ghoshal, The Cultural Heritage of India, 466. Also R.S. Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, 98.
234. N.C.Bandyopadhyaya, Development of Hindu Polity, Part I. PP 110 ff.

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the "Political Council",a " Central aristocratic gathering associated with the king." It was an advisory body to the king, and it acted as a judicial assembly."

That the earlier Sabha were association of kinsfolk bound by ties of blood or of local contoguity talies with our view that Sabha was a local village assembly. But it is not possible to agree with the view of Dr. Bandyopadhyaya that Sabha held a conspicuous place in the political institutionsof the country. Further his assumption that Sabha was a central aristocratic gathering around the king or that it was also an advisory body to the king cannot be substantiated by the scanty material relating to the Sabha in the Vedas. We have already alluded to the terms such 'Sabheya',"Sabha-saha','Sabhavan', Sabhasad'. Some scholars have taken it to indicate that the early Vedic Sabha was a Council of Elders or Nobles."Soma gives him,who offers him oblations .... a son skilful in the affairs of house(Sadanya) Sabha (Sabheya) and sacrifice (vidathya)"[235] The contexts seems to disprove the hypothesis of those who would infer from the term "Sabheya" a restriction in the membership of the Sabha. There can be scarcely any doubt that what is wanted here,is not a son that would have requisite qualifications to become a member of the Sabha,for this sense would be quite inapplicable to the two other cases,viz.,house and sacrifice.There is nothing in these contexts to show any restriction on the membership of the Sabha which was a popular village assembly.

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235. R.V.I.91,120.

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The judicial functions of the Sabha would also prove it to be a village assembly. The Maitrayani Samhita mentions Sabha in the sense of the court house of the village-judge-the Gramya-vadin-who is referred to in all the Samhitas of the Yajurveda.[236] Terms such as 'Sabhasad'[237] and 'Sabhachara'[238] perhaps refer to "assessors" and " members of the law-courts". According to Macdonell Sabhasads were ,perhaps,assessors who decided legal case in the Sabha."It is also possible that the Sabhasads ,perhaps the head of families,were expected to be present at the Sabha oftener than the ordinary man: the meetings of the assembly for justice may have been more frequent than for general discussion and decision."[240] It appears that Sabha met more often for the administration of justice than for political discussion. We come across sharp repartees and offensive speeches,as theives and criminals were dragged before the Sabha.It appears that both the rich and poor had to submit to the decisions of the elders assembled in the Sabha.[241] However,it is difficult to agree with Dr. Jayaswal's contention that the Sabha acted as a "national judicature."[242] All that we can conclude from the references quoted above is that the village assembly (Sabha)primarily performed judicial

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236.Taitt.Sam.,II.3,1.3; Kath.Sam.,XI.4;Mait.Sam.,II.2,1.
237. A.V.III.29,1; VII.12,2; XIX.55,6.
238. Vaj.Sam.,XXX.6;Taitt.Br.,III.4,2,1.
239. Vedic Index,II.428.
240. Ibid.
241. A.V.VII.12,3.
242. K.P. Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,20.

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work,though it had the right to discuss political matters also.

In view of the above discussion we may infer the following: first,that Sabha was a recognized institution of the Vedic age .Secondly,that the village assembly (Sabha)was perhaps different from the one attended by kings in the capital towns .[243] just as the Gramini who was the village head might have been different from the one mentioned in the list of the king-makers. Thirdly,the political activity of a royal pair in the Sabha as described in the Vajasaneyi Samhita[244] may suggests that the king was in close contact with the village.

The Samiti: In the Vedas"Samiti" denotes an assembly of the Vedic Aryans .[245] It is referred to in those portions of the Rigveda which are considered to be the latest. The references are from book I and X.[246] It seems that the Samiti assumed importance only towards the end of the early Vedic age or even later.[247] To quote Dr. K.P.Jayaswal ,"Samiti was a product of the developed,not early ,Vedic age."[248] In all the four references in the Atharvaveda,[248] where Sabha and Samiti are mentioned together,Sabha is invariably mentioned earlier than the Samiti. This would also suggest the Sabha to be older than the Samiti. Describing the Samiti as an institution of developed society, Dr.K.P. Jayaswal writes,:"The developed stage of debate,evidently

243. R. Shamasastry,Evolution of Indian Polity,64.
244. Vedic Index II.430.
245. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institution in Ancient India,102.
246. Ibid.
247. Hindu Polity,14.
248. A.V.V.19,15; VI.88,3; VII.12,1; XII.1,56.

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a free right of discussion,the anxiety of the debator to win over the opinion of the others,all point to a culture of considerable degree ".[249] Dr. Jayaswal discountenances the views of European scholars,who have compared the Samiti to the Germanic folk-assembly.[250]

According to Dr. Altekar,"The average state of the Rigvedic period consisted of only a few square miles like the city-state of ancient Greece. It had a capital,not much larger than a few dozen villages comprised in it. Villages had their own popular assemblies known as Sabha,and the capital had the Central Assembly for the whole state,which was called the Samiti."[251] It is generally recognized that early Samiti was a folk assembly in which people of the tribe gathered for transacting tribal business."The word Samiti (Sam+iti) means 'meeting together';i.e.,an assembly. The Samiti was the national assembly of the whole people or Visah,for we find 'the whole people' or Samiti,in the alternative,electing and reelecting the Rajan or 'king'.[252] The whole people were supposed to be present in the Assembly."[253] Atharvaveda refers to the Samitis of the whole land.[254] We have already seen that the tribal state of the Vedic age was a rural kingdom consisting of several villages.Regarding the Samiti it seems that those who

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249. Hindu Polity,15.
250. Ibid.
251. Altekar,The State and Government in Ancient India from the Earliest times to C.1200 A.D.,76;Ibid note,95-97.
252. R.V.X.173,1;A.V.VI.87,1.
253. K.P.Jayaswal,Ibid,12.
254. A.V.III.1,56,ye samgrama samitayah.

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were assembled were 'villages together'(Sangrama).We have the 'village-together' meeting (Sangrama) "desirous of agreement' in the Taittiriya Samhita.[255] It seems that the village formed the basis of the constitution of the Samiti.[256]Samiti has been defined by Sayana as the Commune of villagers or of village elders.[257]Dr. Jayaswal thinks that the composition of the Samiti was based on some principle of representation and the village were perhaps represented by its Gramni.As we have already seen the Vedic state was a rural kingdom and its central assembly,the Samiti also seems to have maintained its rural character .According to ludwig the Samiti was a lagger assembly and included not only all the people (visah)but also Brahmanas and Maghavans.[259] Samiti must have been a general tribal assembly corresponding to the Agora of homeric times.[260]

An important function of the Samiti was to elect a king.[261] Professor Zimmer is of the opinion that Samiti could elect a king.[262] A passage in the Rigveda[263]probably refers to an influential candidate for the throne,wishing to carry through his will in the teeth of the Samiti.Dr. Jayaswal also supports this view.He has quoted a complete Sang of Election in his celebrated work Hindu Polity.[264] Dr. U.N.Ghoshal also thinks

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255. Taitt.Sam.,II.1,8.451.
256. K.P. Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,16.
257. Samitih Samgramin Jana Sabha.
258. K.P. Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,15.
259. Ludwig,Rigveda,pp.3;253 ff.(trans.);Vedic Index,II.430.
260. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions , 102.
261. A.V.III.4,2.
262. A.V.V.19,15;Zimmer,AL,175;K.P.Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,12.
263. R.V. X.166,4.
264. K.P. Jayaswal,HinduPolity,193;f.n.1;A.V.VI.87-88.This hymn occurs also in R.V. X.173 with slight modification.

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that there is nothing improbable in the election of the king in special cases by the Samiti. He agrees with Zimmer that the Samiti composed of the visah could even re-elect the king.[265]

It was the duty of the king to attend the meetings of Samiti.This is demonstrated by the use of the simile in a hymn of the Rigveda which says-"like a true king going to the Samiti.[266] If he did not attend it,"he would be considered 'untrue'".The kings present at the meetings of the Samiti guided its deliberations.[267]"The practice of the king presenting himself before the Samiti continued probably as long as the Samiti existed. The Chandogya Upanisad relating the visit of Svetaketu Aruneya Gautama to the Samiti of the Panchalas, mentions the king(Prabahana Jaivala) as present in the Samiti.[268] The Samiti was considered to be a great asset to the king.The Samiti was so closely inter-woven with the political system of the day that a king,without a Samiti was not even to be thought of.[269] What forest was to a buffalo,what a pitcher was to the Soma Juice,what a sacrifice was to the priest,so was the Samiti to the king.[270]"In other words,the Samiti was the main prop without which the royal power could not be conceived to have subsisted."[271] The most important and significant hope expressed in the Atharvaveda[272] on behalf of an exiled king,who has succeeded

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265. Ghoshal,The beginnings of Indian Historiography and Other Essays ,146.
266. R.V.IX.92,6;Cf.R.V.X.97,6.
267. R.V. IX.92,6;Chand.V.3.Cf.;Brih.VI.2.
268. K.P.Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,13.
269. R.V.IX.92,6.
270. Ibid.
271. R.C.Majumdar,Corporate Life in Ancient India,115.
272.A.V.VI.88,3.(dhruvaya te samitih kalpatamih).

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in his restoration,is that his Samiti may for-ever be in agreement with him. In another passage of the Atharvaveda,[273] at the end of a long list of imprecations against those ksatriya kings who injure a Brahmana,we are told that the Samiti does not suit such a king.

Scholars have attached much consitutional and political importance to the Samiti.[274] Prof. Ghoshal also speaks of the "right of control possessed by the Popular Assembly over the distribution of public funds."He refers to the following passage of the Satapatha Brahmana:[275]

The Fathers have prepared this place for him For Yama is the Ksatra (nobility or ruling power,),and the Fathers (deceased ancestors) are the clansmen;and to whom-so-ever the chief (ksatriya) with the approval of the clan,grants a settlement,that (settlement)is properly given:and in like manner does Yama,the ruling power,with the consent of the Fathers,the clan, now grant to this (sacrifice) a settlement on this earth.""This passage evidently refers to the public land of the Folk or the State,and it seems to mean that while the king's gift of such land with the consent of the people was in accordance with the tribal or customary law,it was sometimes arbitrarily disposed of by the sole authority of the ruler."[276] Prof. Ghoshal seems to hold,on the basis of

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273. A.V.V. 19,15.(na smai samitih kalpate na mitram vayate vasam).
274. Zimmer,AL.,175;Vedic Index,II,431;Altekar,the State and Government in Ancient India,98-99;K.P.Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,12-13;Ghoshal,Beginnings of Indian Historiography and Other Essays,146,148
275. Sat. Br. VII,1,1,4;S.B.E.XLI,299.
276. Ghoshal, Beginnings of Indian Historiography and Other Essays,149,n.(13a).

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the evidence of the Satapatha Brahmana quoted above, that the popular Assembly had the control over the distribution of lands. In this context Dr. R.S.Sharma remarks :"Although this reference does not speak of the Samiti, the tribesman may have discussed the distribution of land when they met together in that body."[277]

The Samiti also performed certain non-political activities. The concluding hymn of the Rigveda,[278] according to Dr. Altekar,[279] seems to refer to the Samiti as a social or learned gathering. In the later Vedic period the Samiti discussed philosophical topics. In the Chandogya Upanisad[280] we are told that Svetaketu was a young man .He completed his education at the age of twenty four and claimed complete knowledge of philosophical literature. He presented himself before the Samiti of the Pancalas .Pravahana Jaivali, the king of the Pancalas, put to him five philosophical questions, none of which Svetaketu could answer. Pravahana Jaivali remarked , "How could anybody who did not know these things say that he had been educated?" According to Dr. K.P.Jayaswal:"Here we find the Samiti acting as a sort of national academy."[281]

The Samiti must have performed religious functions also. We have prayers for reaching common agreement in the Samiti. In a hymn the Angi is invoked in the Samiti to enjoy the portions

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277. R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, 106.
278. R.V. X.191, 2.3.
279. Altekar, The State and Government in Ancient India, 98.
280. Chand., V.3; Brih. VI.2.
281. K.P.Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, 14.

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offered to him as oblations.It is also desired that the divine Samiti may take place among the gods also.[282] These references may imply religious functions of the Samiti.

Mr.N.C.Bandyopadhyaya[283] describes military functions of the Samiti also. Commentators take the term Samiti to mean war or battle array. According to Yaska the word Samiti means battle.[284] Furtjer ,Sayana[285] also translates the word Samiti as Yuddha or Samgrama. A reference in the Atharvaveda may sugget that the Samiti was identical with the tribal military unit Grama. The collection of Grama was Samgrama.[286] It is joind with Samiti.[287] The normal sence of the word Samgrama in the Atharvaveda[288] and later [289] is war,'battle! According to Dr. R.S.Sharma Samiti's association with the fighting is supported by a comparative study of early Indo-European institution. Samiti might have been used for military purposes.[290] "The Vedic state was a small one like the city-states of ancient Greece; and the Samiti probably consisted of the heads of the few military and aristocratic families which occupied a prominent position in the political and social life of the

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282.A.V.XVIII.i,26.
283. N.C.Bandyopadhyaya,Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories,119.
284. Nirukta,II.107.
285. Comm.on R.V.X.97,6.
286. A.V.XII.1,56.
287. Ibid.
288. A.V.VI.24,7.
289. Taitt.Sam.,II.1,3,1;8,4.etc.
290. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institution in Ancient India,104.

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community. Priests in these days played an important part even on the battle-field, and, therefore, it is not unlikely that they may also have been represented in the Samiti.[291]

In view of the importance attached to the Samiti in the Vedic age, certain references in the Samhitâs may suggest the rules framed for the guidance of the Samiti:-

(1) To assemble together.[292]

(2) To be of one voice i.e., to be unanimous in the expression of their views.[293]

(3) To be of one mind, and all to be of one accord.[294]

(4) To bear in mind that this advice was common to all.[295]

(5) To remember that Samiti was common to all[296] meaning thereby that the Samiti was open to everyone.

(6) To see that everyone was of one opinion.[297]

(7) To discern that the intent and purpose of the whole people and of the Samiti was one and the same.[298]

(8) To be ever of one and the same resolve, that is, of firm determination.[299]

(9) To be of one heart.[300]

(10) To elect a king of the choice of the people.[301]

(11) To have respect for the authority of the king, and to see that he was never dethroned.[302]

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291. Altekar, State and Government in Ancient India, 144.
292. R.V. X.191,2.
293. R.V. X.191,2.
294. R.V. X.191, 2.
295. R.V. X.191,3.
296. R.V. X.191,3.
297. R.V. X.191,3.
298. R.V. X. 191,3; Cf. A.V. VI.42,2.
299. R.V. X.191,4.
300. R.V. X.191,4.
301. R.V. X.173,1.
302. R.V. X.173,1.

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(120) To take, however, requisite care at the same time, that their ever dear nation was duly respected, and that no wicked person ever governed or lorded it over them.[303]

Thus, the Vedas stress the need for concord in the Samiti. The prayer for agreement in the Samiti, that the Mantra be common, the Samiti be common, manas be common and their thought (citta)[304] be united would imply that the Aryans strove to reach common agreement in the Samiti. We have prayer for a 'common Samiti' and 'common policy of state', a 'common aim and a common mind.[305] Dr. R.C. Majumdar has referred to prayers and ceremonies, charms and counter charms to get better of one's rival in debate in the Samiti.[306] Again, he quotes a hymn of the Atharvaveda which refers to a ceremony for gaining the victory in debate or in the deliberations of an assembly.[307] We have prayers and ceremonies to induce the members present in the Samiti to accept the view of the speaker. Prayers were directed to make one's speech pleasant to members and to bend the minds of those who were of different views.[308]

Thus the Samiti played an important part in the Vedic age. It seems to have carried on active discussion with a view to achieving concord. "May deliberations be one pointed; discussions to the same intent; and resolutions to the same effect. Oh Raja Soma, sow the seeds of agreement among them."[309] However there is

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303. R.V. I.23,9.
304. R.V. X.191,3.
305. A.V. VI.42,2.
306. R.C. Majumdar, Corporate Life in Ancient India, 111.
307. Ibid. 112; A.V. VII.12.
308. R.C. Majumdar Corporate Life in Ancient India, 115-116.
309. A.V. VI.88,3.

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no unanimity among the scholars in regard to the exaxct meaning of the above quoted passage.Macdonell and Keith interpret this passage as merely the proof of the concord between the King and the Samiti.[310] But even this would not show the political importance of the Samiti which was the central assembly of the Vedic state which can at best be described as a rural kingdom.

The Vidatha:

The Vedic literature provides numerous vague references to the Vidatha.In the Rigveda alone atleast ninety seven verses refer to it,while Atharvaveda mentions it in about twenty hymns.The Vajasaneyi Samhita,the Brahmanas and Taittiriya Aranyaka also contain references to the Vidatha. References to this institution are fewer in the later compositions of Vedic literature.

According to Roth the sense of Vidatha is primarily "order",then "the concrete body which gives the orders",then the "assembly"for secular or religious ends or for war.[311] This interpretation is vague and so far as we know Vidatha is never used in the sense of "order"or giver of the orders. Oldenberg once thought that main idea of the Vidatha was "ordinance "(from Vi-dha,dispose,ordain)and thence "sacrifice". There are Various views about the derivation of the word,and its origin from vid,to know, is most probable,but it has been taken to satnd for sacrifice in some passages of Rigveda[312] and the

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310.Vedic Index II.431.
311. Roth,St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.Vidatha,based on R.V.I. 31,6;117,25;III.1,18;A.V.IV.25,1;V.20,12;RIV.II.1,4;III. 38,8-6;I.166,2;V.59,2,etc.
312. R.V.X.11,3;I.60,1;X.92,2;91,6;V.33,9;III,38,5 etc.

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Atharvaveda .[313] Ludwig thought that the root idea of the Vidatha was an "assembly" especially of the Maghavans and the Brahmanas.[314] In some verses the word occurs in the sense of a mere gathering or assemblage of the people, and has no political coonotation.[315] Geldner held that this word primarily meant "knowledge", "wisdom", "priestly-lore", then "sacrifice" and "spiritual authority." Bloomfield holds that the Vidatha primarily means a "house" in the first place (from vid, acquire) and then the "sacrifice" as connected with the house.[316] Authors of the Vedic Index think that "this...appears to suit all the passages".[317] Zimmer held the view that the Vidatha sometimes meant a "smaller assembly" than the Samiti.[318] This view has been rightly criticized by Macdonell and Keith who write that "we have no ground to be certain that such smaller assemblies ever existed at an early date in India or elsewhere among the Aryan peoples."[319] According to Dr.K.P.Jayaswal the religious life was organized through the "Vidatha assembly, which had existed even earlier than the Samiti." It seems to have been the parent folk-assembly from which the Sabha, Samiti and sena differentiated, for we find ~~that~~ the Vidatha

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313. A.V.VII.77,4; XVIII.1,20; X.30,1 etc.
314. Ludwig, Translation of the Rgveda, III., P.259.
315. A.V.IX.14,22.
316. Journal of the American Oriental Society, XIX.25, P.12.
317. ~~Zimmer, Ab.177.~~ Vedic Index.II.296-97.
318. Zimmer AL.177.
319. Vedic Index II.297.

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associated with civil ,military and religious functions."[320] This,however,is too adventurous a view and can-not be supported by the available sources. Altekar derived the word Vidatha from the root to know,and suggested that it indicated a religious or sacrificial gathering,the retuals at which required the highest knowledge.He thinks that it was a big assembly,probably representing the enire tribe, because there are references to people being arranged there by groups,and singing and dancing."[321] His views like that of Dr.Jayaswal and others,that it was a big assembly of the entire people,is unwarranted by the sources.A local settlement can well provide enough people to be arranged in groups of singers and dancers.

In recent years prof.R.S.Sharma has strongly pleaded the case of the Vidatha as a political assembly following the pattern of Dr.Jayaswal.He holds that"the Vidatha was the earliest folk-assembly of the Indo-Aryans attended both by men and women,performing all kinds of functions,economic, military,religious and social."[322]

Following Roth,Dr.K.P.Jayaswal had suggested that the Vidatha seems to have been "the parent folk-assembly from which the Sabha,Samiti and sena differentiated."Prof.Sharma does not support this view outright but implies more or

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320. K.P.Jayaswal,Hindu Polity,20.
321. A.S.Altekar,State and Government in Ancient India,141.
322. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions, 63-80.

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less the same thing when he says that "although there is no direct evidence to establishe the institutional connection between the Vidatha on the one hand, and the Sabha and Samiti on the other, and examination of the mass occurences of the word in different contexts would show prominent traces of the earliest folk-assembly in the Vidatha."[323] Prof. Sharma has also sought parallels from some anthropological studies of later tribal peoples and compares the Vidatha, "in particular, to the religious functions of the early assemblies of the Indo-European peoples". He also compares Vidatha with Roman curiae which "had its peculiar worship and chapel."[324] Another significant claim of Prof. Sharma is that "women attended the meetings of Vidatha and took part in its deliberations" and that it was "a sort of assembly". He further says that in some cases "the Vidatha means a family council" and compares it to the council of the Iroquois, which generally served as the "democratic assembly of all adult male and female members of the gens, all with equal voice." In this respect Prof. Sharma finds that the "Vidatha was completely different from the earliest known Greek, Roman and German popular assemblies in which woman did not find any place". He infers the aniquity of the Vidatha by noticing the right of women to take part in popular assemblies according to

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323. Ibid. P.79.

324. Ibid. P.88.

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old Welsh laws of "not later than the eleventh century A.D."But these institution of a civilized medieval people can hardly be accepted as evidence of women's rights among the earliest Indo-European peoples ,except by one who is fully convinced of the absolute accuracy of the marxist hypothesis that matriarchy in-variably preceded patriarchy. We think that the mere assocaition of women with the Vidatha does not necessarily make it"a sort of assembly."We do not deny that the women took part in the Vidatha and its ceremonies, The fact that women participated in the Vidatha is a strong argument in favour of the conclusion that it was not a political assembly at all but a mere gathering of a settlement for the performance of religious ceremonies.In Vedic sacrifices women are participants with men.

Prof.Sharma accepts that in certain contexts Vidatha seems to be a "family council."His comparison of Vidatha with the "democratic assembly "of the Iroquois gens shows that the analogy is not accurate.His assumption of tribal character of Vidatha on the basis of its association with gana is not correct.The term gana in Rigveda III.26,6 simply means a group of people,and not "tribal groups"as Prof.Sharma interprets it .His assertion that Vidatha "made laws and ordinances for the regulation of the affairs of the tribe"[325] is based on very meagre grounds.

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325. Ibid.82.

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On the authority of Oldenberg[326], Prof. Sharma says that the Vidatha distributed among its members whatever they produced as food, because in one hymn[326] members are summoned in the Vidatha on the occasion of the distribution of whatever is produced daily by Savitr[327] and because Agni is described as the liberal distributor of produce in the Vidatha.[328] He points out that in this respect Vidatha stood in sharp contrast to the Sabha and Samiti.[328a] The fact of distribution of produce by Savitr and Agni's being called liberal distributor do not prove that the Vidatha performed such functions. The Sabha and Samiti are alluded to as distributing the spoils of war among their members.[329] Passages cited in support of the military functions of the Vidatha are also not conclusive.[331] Evidences have been adduced that the 'people gathered in Vidatha fought together, sang together, prayed together, played together and deliberated together without any discrimination of sex'.[332] At the village congregations people might have sung together without discrimination of sex, but there is no evidence to show that they fought, deliberated and played together in the Vidatha.

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326. S.B.E., XLVI.26.
327. R.V.VII.40,1.
328. R.V.II.1,4.
328a. R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions, 83.
329. Cf. R.V.X.11,8.
330. R.V.VI.8,1; II.1,16; VIII.48,14 etc.
331. A.S.Altekar, State and Government in Ancient India, 141.
332. R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions, 95.

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Out of the 100 references to the Vidatha, it occurs in the Rigveda only twice in connection with the Sabha[333] and once in the same hymn as the Sabha[334] and only once does it appear in the same hymn as the Samiti.[335] This may suggest that there was little institutional connection between them. Vidatha may have been a local body without any political connotation. Most of the 97 verses which refer to the Vidatha have a religious fervour about them. A number of hymns associate Vidatha with the house. This may suggest the local character of the Vidatha.

Numerous occurances of the Vidatha in the Rigveda and Atharvaveda and its close association with the sacrifice, worship, and all gods, together with its not being a tribal body, all point to the fact that the Vidatha was a local congregation of the Vedic settlements, the village, concerned primarily with religious rites and ceremonies. Usually in the Vedic hymns, Vidatha has connotation of a congregation.[336] It may further be pointed out that the social aspect of the Vidatha is revealed in its connection with the welcoming of a bride.[337] In this context Vidatha seems to be a gathering of kith and kin who have come to attened the wedding ceremony which was, as it is totday, a socio-religious rite.

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333. R.V.I.91,20;167,3.
334. R.V.II.24,13(Sabha),16(Vidatha).
335. R.V.X.11,3 (Vidatha),8 (Samiti).
336. R.V.I.91,20;162,1;167,3.6;II.1,4.16;24,16;III.1,2;14,1; 26,6;27,7;54,11;56,5;IV.21,1.2;V.29,15;65,2;VI,61,5;VII. 36,8;43,3;57,2;VIII.39,1;X.85,27;91,9;100,6 etc;A.V.I.15, 4;V.12,7;XII,2,30etc.e
337. R.V.X.85,26.27;A.V.XIV.1,20.21.

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Thus it seems that the Vidatha was a local village congregation which was largely responsible for the performance of religious ceremonies and perhaps that is the reason that most of the writers on political institutions of Ancient India have either egnored the Vidatha completely[338] or have just mentioned it in passing.[339]

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338. U.N.Ghoshal, History of Indian Political Ideas; R.C. Majumdar, Coporate Life in Ancient India; Shamasastry, Evolution of Indian Polity.

339. K.P.Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, 20; A.S.Altekar, State and Government in Ancient India, 141.

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CHAPTER - III

THE SOCIAL LIFE

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THE SOCIAL LIFE

Family Life:

Among the institution that compose a rural society, the family is the most important.It has been its very foundation. It plays an important role in the material and cultural life of the rural people.The Vedic village,as we have already seen, consisted of several families.The unit of social formation was the family comprising several members living under a common head,the father or the elder brother called Kulapā.[1]The Āryan family was of patriarchal type .The story of Sunahsepa would suggest absolute control of the parent over their children.[2] The case of sale of Sunahsepa in Aitareya Brahmana[3]suggests that the son was under the absolute control of the father.This is further suggested by the case of Rijrasva who was deprived of his sight as a punishment by his father.[4] However the relation between the parents and children was one of warm affection.Normally the son was bound to give his father full obedience.[5]On the other hand,the father was expected to be kind.The story of Sunahsepa in the Aitareya Brahmana emphisizes the horror with which father's heartless treatment of his son was viewed.The Upanisadas[6]insist on the spiritual succession

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1. R.V.X.179.
2. R.V.I.,24,12-15;V.2,7.
3. R.V.VII.12-18.
4. R.V.I.116,6;
5. R.V.I.68,5.
6. Kausitaki Upanisad, II.15;Brih.,I.5,25.

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from father to son. Sankhayana Aranyaka[7] refers to the kissing of a grown-up son on the head on important occasions as a token of love. There is a clear evidence of joint family system in the Wedding hymn of the Rigveda[8] in which we are told that the newly married wife rules over (or wins by her love?) her brother-in-law and even over her husband's parents although she herself entertains a feeling of respect for them.[9] During the later Vedic age also joint family continued to be the frame-work on which the society rested.[10]

A characteristic feature of the Vedic family was great importance paid to hospitality[11]. In the Rigveda Agni is called Atithi, the beloved guest in human abodes. A hymn of the Atharvaveda celebrates in detail the merits of hospitality[12]. The Taittiriya Upanisad[13] enjoins to treat guest as a deity (atithi-deva). The Aitareya Aranyaka also lays stress on it.[14] The guest offering formed a daily ritual of the Vedic household.

The Caste System:

The first condition of progress in an early society lies in its capacity for organization. To quote A.R. Desia, "it was

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7. Hopkins, Journal of the American Oriental Society, 28, 120-134.
8. R.V.X.38; A.V.III.30.
9. R.V.X.85, 42; X.85, 46.
10. A.V.II.30, 1-3.
11. Cf. R.V.X.68, 3.
12. A.V.XI.6.
13. Taittiriya Upanisad, I.11, 2.
14. Aitareya Aranyaka, I.1, 1.

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a peculiar development of the Indian social structure on the basis of the Jati division of society which provided the internal mechanism of the village community system and stablized it socially and ideologically....The reason behind such a simultaneous development of the caste system and the village community system is that while the latter fulfilled a vital demand of the Indian socitey concerning its material needs,the former supplied the social foundation to the latter.For the village community system it was a social need that the village-units should not burst as under by the tension generated within them by contradictory aspirations of the people in social and material life;and this need was fulfilled by the Jati division of society,whereby everybody (however humbly or laftily placed in the social hierarchy)had a definite socio-spiritual position and specific work to do."[15]

It is not the object of this thesis to trace the origin and development of caste system as a whole,for that is too big a subject and requires separate treatment by itself.What is intended here is to trace the genesis of the caste system which was very closely related to the rural life of the Vedic age.The extent to which the caste system had been developed in the period of the Rigveda is a matter of keen controversy among the antiquarians.The earliest reference to caste system is traced in the famous Purusha-Sukta of the Rigveda.[16]"When

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15.A.R.Desi,Rural Sociology in India,232-233.
16. R.V.X.90.

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(the gods)divided Purusha ,into how many parts did they cut him up ? What was his mouth? What arms(had he)? What(two objects)are said (to have been)his thighs and feet? The Brahmin was his mouth;the Rajanya was made his arms;the being called Vaisya,He was his thighs;the Sudra sprang from his feet." As pointed out by V.M.Apte,[17] "this passage refers to the first three castes not as sprung from,but as identical with,the mouth, arms and the thighs of the Creator."[18] Inspite of this difference many scholars regard it as the earliest exposition of caste system as evidenced in the later Brahmanical works.

It has been pointed out that the Purusha Sukta is the solitary reference to the division of society into four classes in the Rigveda.This hymn is admittedly of late origin and cannot be accepted as an evidence of the earliest period.Scholers like Muir,[19] Zimmer,[20] Weber [21] have denied the existence of caste in any form in this period. There are,however,some grounds for the view that the four classes were not unknown to the earliest Indo-Aryans .The earliest Iranian society was devided into four classes(Pishtras),the Athravas (priest),the Rathaesthas (warriors), the vastriyas fshouyants (chief of family) and the Huitis (labourers)corresponding to the Brahmans,the Kshatriyas,the Vaisyas and the Sudras of the Purusha -Sukta.

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17. Muir,Original Sanskrit Texts,Vol.I.P.10.
18. The Vedic Age,385
19. Muir,Original Sanskrit Texts,Vol.I.P.239.
20. Zimmer,Al.,185-203.
21. Weber,Indische Studien,Vol.X.P.1.

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The early Vedic society was classified but casteless . The transition from the casteless,though classified society of the early Vedic Aryans to the caste system of the later Vedic age may be traced to the complication of life resulting from the transition of early pastoral nomadic pattern of life to settled mode of rural existence.We have already seen that in the beginning grama denoted small tribal fighting groups who were mobilized together for purposes of war (Samgrama). Davis in his Evolution of War says that pastoral tribes are nomads. There is constant warfare for protecting the herd and resisting aggression.Even when the Rigvedic Aryans had reached a settled mode of rural existence cattle raid so characteristic of the pastoral age still survived.[22] The normal relation between the Gramas was one of chronic hostality. We have already referred to the Kulpas or chief of the family who used to go to war under the leadership of the Vrajpati ,who according to Zimmer,was the leader of the village contingent.The necessity of carrying a ceaseless fight led to the emergence of the fighting class. Known as Kshatriyas. Those among the villagers who were devoted to the humanizing persuit of religion were known as Brahmans .The villagers devoted to agriculture, pastoral persuits,trade and industry constituted a third class called Vaisyas .As regards the fourth class,the Sudra is

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22. R.V.I.33,3;II.30,5;III.30,20;III.50,3;VI.19,12;VI.26,2;V. 33,4;VI.35,2;VII.32,16,etc.;Doris Srinivasan, Concept of the Cow in the Rigveda.

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mentioned for the first and only time in the 'Purusha Sukta'. But dasyu and dasa are known to the Rigveda,both as aborigines independent of Aryan control and as conquered slaves. The latter may reasonably be supposed to represent the Sudras.There must have been whole village of aborigines,though under Aryan control.The term 'Sudra'was evidently applied to the inhabitants of these villages.[23]

In the early Vedic age there were distinction between class and class,profession and profession .But there was an absolute fluidity about these professions and classes.The Brahmins formed a profession,not a caste.The Kshatriyas formed the military class but the Rishis and the Brahmins often took part in the fight.[24] The hereditary occupation was not recognized during this age .Professions were not yet determined by birth. Members of the same family were engaged in different vocations. A poet tells us that although he is the composer of the hymn he sings,yet his father was a physician while his mother ground grain between mill-stones,[25] proving merely that in the economy of this period there was mobility of labour.The existence of this freedom of movement from one occupation to another would lead to dignity of labour.There is nothing to show that the profession was the monopoly of a particular and definite class of people .And as a matter of fact we find the Vedic Rishis

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23. The Vedic Age ,387.
24. R.V.VII.33,1.
25. R.V.X.112,1.2.3.

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themselves preparing sacreficial posts and altars.The worker in wood had clearly the place of honour,needed as he was to produce the war chariots,the ships and boats for trade and cart for agricultural purposes. it is interesting to note that the culivators,artisans and hadi-crafts-men are in no way regarded as inferior members of the community.Mr. Baden Powell[26] assumes that the Aryans had their lands cultivated by the conquered aborigines but the Rigveda unquestionably described a society which is not dependent on such servile labour and in which the ordinary tasks of life are carried out by the free men of the tribe.The heredity of occupation was not yet a recognized principle and other essential features of the caste system such as prohibition of interdinning and inter-marriage and the notion of untouchability is not even remotely hinted in the Rigveda .Even when the caste system developed during the later Vedic age ,it was nothing but the registration of an economic fact,the need for division of labour.Caste therefore both in its inception and its further progress was the direct result of economic and social differentiation .The society was in a state of fluid.The seeds of some of the most significant developments were sown.They grew into the later regidity of the caste system. Occupations grew in number and variety with the spread of settled life. The contact with the aborigines also raised the question of the purity of blood and the colour-bar.The system,however,was not yet seem to be so rigid as in the succeeding period of the Sutras ."It was a mid-way between the laxity of the Rigveda and

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26. Indian Village Community,1896;Village Communities in India, 1899.

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the rigidity of the Sutras !"[27] In the Rigveda, the restriction on inter-marriage applied only to incest, such as marriage between brother and sister, father and daughter. In the Satpatha Brahmana[28] the restriction is extended to marriage with relations of the third or the fourth degree, while Brahmana and Kshatriya could inter-marry with the lower castes, including Sudras. Sukanya, daughter of Kshatriya King Sariyata, is mentioned as marrying Brahmana Chyavana.[29] Change of caste was very unusual but perhaps not impossible in that age . The most glaring evil of the caste system, namely the doctrine of the impurity communicated by the touch or contact of lower castes (known as "untouchability" today), had not yet reared its ugly head .On the whole it is quite clear that caste had not yet become a rigid system, and none of the three factors which definitely characterise it today, viz. prohibition of inter-dining and inter-marriage, and determination by hereditary deseent , was yet established on a secure basis.

On the basis of a passage in the Rigveda,[30] Zimmer[31] argues that as yet we have no evidence in Vedic literature of different and varied social and economic groups living in one village, since each village was presumably inhabited by a group of families belonging to the same clan and following the

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27. R.K.Mookerjee, Hindu Civilization, 89.
28. Sat. Br. 1.8,3,6.
29. Sat.br. IV.1,5,7.
30. R.V.II.26,3.
31. Zimmer, AL., 159-60.

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same occupation which was mainly agricultural and pastoral in character. T.H.Hutton[32] thinks that the conquered and subdued dasas and dasyus who probably served as agricultural labourers and manual workers, used to live in separate village settlements of their own. Indeed, a sort of segregation of men and women following different crafts and belonging to different occupational groups living in separate villages, may have been operating even in pre-Vedic times amongst various occupational tribes settling down and forming into separate occupational villages.[33] "It is permissible to conjecture that the Vedic Aryans had adopted, or were obliged to adopt this pattern of occupational villages, which was presumably reinforced by conquered dasas and dasyus following different occupations and settling away from Aryan villages in separate village settlements of their own.[34]" In the later Vedic age we come across the word Ni-sada,[35] which seems to denote not so much a particular tribe, but to be the general term for the non-Aryan tribes who were not under Aryan control.[36] Weber[37] thinks that the Nisadas were the settled aborigines (from ni, 'down', and sad, 'settle'), a view supported by the fact that the

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32. T.H.Hutton, Caste in India, Ch.XII.P.158-60.
33. Ibid.
34. Amita Ray, Villages, Towns and Secular Buildings in Ancient India, P.25.
35. Taitt.Sam., IV.5,4,2; Kath.Sam., XVII.13; Mait.Sam., II.6,5; Vaj.Sam., XVI.27; Ait.Br., VIII.11; Panca.Br., XVI.6,8, etc.
36. Vedic Index, I.481.
37. Indische Studien, 9, 340 Cf. 10, 13, 16.

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ritual of Visvajitisacrifice[38] requires a temporary residence with Nisadas .A village of Nisadas is mentioned in the Latayayana Srauta Sutra.

Thus the varna division of the early Vedic age and the caste system of the later period played a significant role in the rural life of the Vedic age .It provided the social foundation to the village by providing "an unalterable division of labour" in society,whereby "the whole mechanism discloses a systematic division of labour"which is regulated "with the irresistable authority of law of Nature."

Position Of Women:

During the Vedic period when civilisation was essentially rural in its character and life was lived in agricultural communities and wealth consisted of crops and cattle,woman was comparatively free and her place in the community was naturally determined by her ability to share in the work of that community.We have already referred to the Aryans of the early Vedic age,who were a semi-nomadic people,more in pastoral stage.[38] We have also referred to their social development from semi-nomadic mode of existence to settled rural pattern of life.The influence of their earliest life-pattern is writ large upon their social organization particularly as far as the position of women is concern. In the Rigveda we find the Aryans settling down to a pastoral and agricultural village

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38. Kausitaki Brahmana ,XXV.15; Latyayana Srauta Sutra, I., 1,12.

39. R.S.Sharma,Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India,264.

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life .Analizing the relatively more satisfactory position of women in the Vedic age,which we will presently see,Dr.Altekar writes:"As a rule in a community, which is civilized and is moving in search of pastures fresh and new,women occupy and honourable position.Men are mostly engrossed in military or semi-military activities,and they have to rely to a very great degree on the help and cooperation of women in the normal spheres and activities of family life. Under such circumstances women ~~can~~ can clearly and convincingly demonstrate to men that they are not parasites,but very useful members of society, whose cooperation is very valuable in securing prosperity in peace and victory in war."[40]

In the early Vedic age women seem to have enjoyed a respectable position in the society.In acient times in all patriarchal societies the birth of a girl was generally an unwelcome event.Even during the early Vedic times the daughter was not as welcome as the son.[41]References are frequently made to the desire for a son.[42] In a passage of the Rigveda it is prayed that the wife may bear ten sons.[43]The Atharvaveda contains charms and rituals to ensure the birth of a son in

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40. A.S.Altekar ,The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 341.

41. A.V.VI.2,3;VI.91,10;VIII.6,25;Ait.Br.,VII.13;Max-Muller, Ancient Sanskrit Literature ,409;Schrader ,Prehistoric Antiquities ,390;Zimmer,AL.,320.

42. R.V.X.183,1;A.V.VI.81,3;XI.1,1;Taitt.Sam.,VI.3,6,1;VII. 1,5,1;Taitt.Br.,I.1,9,1.

43. R.V.X.85,45.

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preference to that of a daughter.[44] However the birth of the daughter was not a source of consternation to the family in the Vedic age .Upanisadas even recommend certain rituals for ensuring the birth of a scholarly daughter in the family.[45] The reasons why daughters were relatively less unpopular during the early centuries have been discussed in detail by Dr.A.S.Altekar.[46] We may add here that the rural community during the Vedic period was essentially pastoral and agricultural.The women occupied a comparatively better place in the society because of her ability to share in the work of that community. In the Vedic literature the regular word for daughter is 'Duhitr!'[47] The English word daughter,German Tochter, thygater in Greek ,dear in Irish, Lithuanian Dukte, doch in Russian are of common derivation with the sanskrit duhitr .The sanskrit root'duh'means'to milk',so the word was, according to this theory,originally dogdhri="She who milks", to indicate that it was the daughter of the premitive Aryan family who did milking.[48]"It would appear that the general freedom and better status which women enjoyed in the Vedic age were largely due to men being engrossed in the work of conquest and consolidation. Women used to take and active part in

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44. A.V.III.23;VI.11,3;Cf.VIII.6,25.
45. Brih.,IV.4,18.
46. A.S.Altekar,The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 4-5.
47. R.V.VIII.101,15;X.17,1;40,8;61,6.7;A.V.II.14,2;VI.100,3; VII.12,1;X.1,25;Sat.Br.,I.7,4,1;8,1,8,etc.
48. Macdonell & Keith do not agree with this view.Vedic Index,I.371.

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agriculture, and the manufacture of cloth, bows, arrows and other war material. They were thus useful members of society, and could not be therefore treated with an air of patronage or contempt. The cheap or forced labour of the enslaved population was not yet available to the Aryans for the tasks mentioned above."[49] Some European scholars had concluded that a passage in the Yajurveda referred to the custom of exposure of new born daughters.[50] It is, however, now generally admitted by Indian and European scholars that the above interpretation of the passage in question is wrong.[51] It appears that in the Vedic age women were on an equal footing with men in the matter of receiving the knowledge of the sacred literature. Lopamudra, Visvavara, Sikta Nivavari and Ghosha were the authors of the Rigveda I.179, V.28, VII.91, IX. 81, II.20, and X.39 and 40 respectively.[52] Some of them not only expounded hymns, but also performed sacrefices like priests, offered oblations to the god and won honourable places in the galaxy of the noble singers and occupied glorious niches in the temple of fame. The Atharvaveda observes that a maiden can succeed in her marriage only if she has been properly trained during the period of studentship (brahmacharya).[53]

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49. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 342.
50. Kath. Sam., XXVII.9; Taitt. Sam., VI.5, 10; Mat. Sam., IV.6, 4; Zimmer, AL., 319, 320; Weber, Indische Studien, 5, 54, 260; Shrader, Prehistoric Antiquities, 389, 390; Cf. Also Ludwig, Translation of the Rigveda, 6, 142; Pischel, Vedische Studien, 2, 48; Vedic Index, I.395.
51. Vedic Index, I.395; A.S. Altekar, The Position of Womenin Hindu Civilization, 7.
52. Ibid, 10.
53. A.V. XI.5, 18.

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In the Vedic literature we find ample evidence that women too under went the stage of Brahmacharya [54] along with men . Thus women were given equal opportunity of receiving education and studying different branches of knowledge. Women students were divided into two catagories, Brahmavadinis and Sadyodvahas. The former were life long students of theology and philosophy; the latter used to prosecute their studies till their marriage at the age of 15 or 16 . During the later Vedic age, specially in time of the Upanisadas , we have scholars like Maitreyi and Gargi who participated in the great philosophical deliberations held at the court of Janaka Videha and other contemporary kings .[55] The cultivation of fine arts like music, dancing and painting was encouraged in the case of the girls since very early times. Musical recitation of the Sama hymns was originally the special function of the ladies.[56]

In the Vedic age, women occupied a very proud position in the rural household. We are told that 'the wife is the home' (Jayedastam)[57]. According to ancient ideals , the wife if the half of man and hence as long as he does not obtain her, so long he is not regenerated, for so long he is incomplete .[58] In regulating the activities in the home, her word was to be final. Immediately after her marriage, she is instructed to

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54. A.V.XI.7,20.
55. A.S.Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 12; P.N.Prabhu, Hindu Social Orgnization (2nd Ed.) P.288; Brih., III,6 and 8; II.4.
56. Sat. Br. XIV.3,1,35. Cf. III.2,4,6.
57. R.V.III.53,4.
58. Sat.Br.V.2,1,10.

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"go to the house to be a mistress there !"[59] She is further asked to bear full sway over her husband's father, mother, brothers and sisters.[60] She is again and again addressed as the queen of the house, who rules over all the members of the family as ocean rules over all the rivers of the world.[61] In the Rigveda she is asked to look after the affairs of the house and to gaurd its interests, as sedulously as possible.[62] Thus, women occupied a very respectable and important place in the Vedic household. She was the very axis on which the wheel of household life in ancient India turned. The words Pati (master) and Patni (mistress) used in the Rigveda, signify the equality of position of husband and wife in the household.[63] We can gather some idea about daily routine of women from the hymns of the Rigveda. She used to rise early with the dawn and roused all from sleep and sent the servants about their respective business.[64] She atonce applied herself to the performance of her household duties-dusting, sweeping and washing the cooking pots and utensils. She was a regular participator in the offerings of the husband and her foremost duty was to keep the sacred flames alive. As soon as the cows were milked and milk brought home in pails, she stirred it over the fire churned some of it for butter and proceeded to prepare the meals of the day. After mid-day meals

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58. R.V.X.85,26.
60. R.V.X.85,46.
61. A.V.XIV.1,43.
62. R.V.X.85,27.
63. Vedic Index, I.474-88.
64. R.V.I.124,4.

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she attended to her toilet, dressed herself and the children neatly.[65] Often she had male and female servants under her, whom she employed in their respective duties and treated them kindly.[66] She also looked after the cows and other domestice animals and supervised the work entrusted to her.[67]

In the Vedic age, marriage was regarded as a social and religious duty and necessity. It opened a new period of holy life which was to be led at the altar of truth and duty.[68] However the "society did not insist that it should be performed at all cost, even if there were insuperable impediments in arranging a suitable match. The Vedic literature often refers to the spinster, amajuh, one who grows old in one's parents house, is the significant expression used to denote and old maid",[69] In the Vedic age we do not find positive evidence of the existence of the practice of pre-puberscent marriages. The very term marriage, Udvaha, 'carrying away (of the bride)' pre-supposes a post-puberty marriage, for it shows that immediately after her marriage the bride went to her husband's house to live as a wife. In the Vedic texts marriage appears essentially as a union of two persons of opposite sex of full development. In the Vedas we have numerous references[70] to grown up unmarried girls. There are references

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65. R.V.I.123,11.
66. R.V.I.X.85,43.
67. R.V.X.85,44.
68. R.V.X.85,24.
69. A.S.Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 32.
70. R.V.I.117,7; II.17,7; X.39,3; A.V.I.14; Bloomfielf, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 253.

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to the ornaments born by maiden at festival occasions in order to win lovers.[71] Similarly there are mane references to the love of the youth for the maidens, and his seeking her[72]. The gifts of the lovers are also referred to.[73] Again, we find reference to the mutual affection of the lovers.[74] We have a spell by which a lover seeks to send all the house hold to sleep when he visits his beloved.[75] All these evidences would amply prove that girls were normally married long after they had reached puberty. "The married ritual also quite clearly presumes that the marriage is a real and not a nominal one: an essential feature is the taking of the bride to her husband's whome, and the ensuing cohabitation."[76] That women had the right of the choice of their own husbands[77] would also prove that the marriages were transacted when maidens were generally in mature years. Further, a study of the Vedic marital rituals shows that the marriage had to be consumated at the earliest on the fourth night after the ceremony and this would not have been possible if the bride was not a youthful lady.

The restrictions on the field of choice in marriage were few. Marriage connection with the dasyu-varna people, with whome the Aryans came into conflict in India, were probably prohibited.[78] The dialogue of Yama and Yami in the Rigveda[79]

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71. R.V.I.123,11;VII.2,5.
72. R.V.I.115,2.
73. R.V.I.117,18.
74. R.V.I.167,3;IX.32,5;56,3;X.34,5.
75. R.V.VII.55,5.8.
76. R.V.X.85;Vedic Index,I.475.
77. R.V.X.27,12.
78. The Vedic Age,389.
79. R.V.X.10.

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clearly point to a prohibition of the marriage of brother and sister.It was also banned within the circle of agnates and cognates,but the Satapatha Brahmana[80] allowssmarriages within the third and fourth degree on either side.The prohibition of marriage within the Gotra cannot then have existed[81], though naturally marriages out-side the Gotra were frequent.Brothers and sisters were not to marry before their elders.[82]The remarriage of a widow was allow.[83]The Aryans could have more tham one wife.This is clearly proved by several differences to his effect in the Vedic texts.[84]However monogamy

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80. Sat.Br.I.8,3,6;Vedic Index I.475.

81. Cf.Weber,Indisches Studien, 10,75,76;Max-Muller,Ancient Sanskrit Literature,387;Schrsder,Prehistoric Antiquities, 392;Hopkins, Journal of the American Oriental Society , 13,345et seq.

82. Mait. Sam.,IV.1,9;A.V.VI.112,3;Taitt.Br.,III.2,8,11.

83. A.V.IX.5,27.28;R.V.X.40,2.

84. R.V.I.62,11;71,1;104,3;105,8;112,19;186,7;VI.53,4;VII.18 2;26,3;X.43,1;101,11.Cf.A.V.III.4;Taitt-Sam.,VI.5,1,4, etc.;Schrader,Prehistoric Antiquities,387;Sat.Br.IX.1,4, 6;Taitt.Br.III.9,4,4;V.3,1,4;VI.5,3,1;VII.5,1,1;XIII.2, 6,4;4,1,8;5,2,2.5.9;Panca.Br.XIX.1; 4 Cf.R.V.V.2,2;37, 3,A.V.II.36,3;Taitt.Sam.,I.8,9,1;R.V.X.102,11;A.V.VII.113, 2;XX.128,10.11;Sat.Br.XIII.2,6,6;4,1.8;5,2,7;Taitt.Sam.I. 8,9,1;Taitt.Br.I.7,3,4;III.9,4,4;Kath.Sam.I.8,9,1;Taitt.Br. I.7,3,4;III.9,4,4;Kath.Sam.,X.10;XV.4;Sat.Br.V.3,1,13;Ait. Br.,III.22;Taitt.Br.I.7,3,3;III.9,4,4;A.V.XX.128,10.11;Sat. Br.XIII.2,6,5;4,1,8;5,2,6;Taitt.Br.I.7,3,3 et seq.III.9, 4,5;Sat.XIII.4,1,8.

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seems to be the general rule.[85] Polyandry is not referred to any-where in the Rigveda[86].It is true that there are some passages[87] in the Vedic literature where the wife is mentioned in connection with husbands in plural.The plurals in these cases are,however,either generic[88] or used majestatis causa.[89]

The Vedic literature does not refer to parents controlling the marriages of sons and daughters. The choice of a husband generally rested with the young women herself.[90] We have references to beautiful brides selecting their husbands. However,in the succeeding ages of Brahmanas and Sutras ,women's liberty in this regard was considerably restricted.[91]

The uncomplimentary references to some sons-in-law suggest that in some cases a bride-price was paid by not a very desirable son-in-law.[92] Dowry had also to be given in case of a girl with physical defects.[93] Occasionally marriages by capture may have taken place,but only as a knightly feats, as when Vimada carried off purumitra's daughter against her father's wish,but very possibly with her own consent.[94] The

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85. R.V.I.105,2;II.2,47;IV.3,2;X.85,32.
86. Vedic Index,I.479,The Vedic Age,390.
87. R.V.X.85,38;A.V.XIV.1,44.52.61.
88. Zimmer ,AL.,326.
89. Weber ,Indische Studien, 5,191.
90. R.V.X.27,12.
91. Ait.Br.IV.7,Sat.Br.IV.115,9.
92. R.V.VIII.20,2;I.109,2.
93. R.V.VI.28,5;X.27,12; A.V.V.17,12; I.109,2;Cf.Hopkins, Journal of the American Oriental Society,13,345;Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda,741.
94. Cf.R.V.I.112,19;116,1;117,26;X.39,7;65,12.

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various types of marriage detailed in the later law books had not been formulated as yet. The Wedding hymn of the Rigveda[95] gives us some idea of the marriage ritual. The ceremony commenced at the bride's house[96]. The bridegroom and the party went to the bride's house where the well-adorned bride also joined the marriage feast.[97] The bride-groom having caused the bride to mount a stone, formally grasped her hand, and led her round the house-hold fire.[98] This act constituted the marriage, the husband hence being called 'he who takes by the hand' (hasta-grabha).[99] The festivities being over,[100] the bride-groom took the bride to his home in a car in marriage procession,[101] then followed cohabitation ~~mf~~ which was signified by the purification of the bride's garment.[102] The elements of the marriage ceremony described in the marriage hymn of the Rigveda are reproduced without much change in the corresponding Atharvaveda hymn, which adds only one important feature which later became ~~and~~ essential, namely, the bride-groom causing the bride to mount a stone before grasping her hand.

The poetical ideal of family was decidedly high and

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95. R.V.X.85.
96. R.V.X.17,1.
97. R.V.IV.85,9.
98. Cf. R.V.X.85,36.38; A.V.XIV.1,47.48; XIV.2,71; Kath.Sam. XXXV.18; Ait.Br.VIII.27; Brih.VI.4,19 (Madhyamdin).
99. R.V.X.18,8; Cf. A.V.XIV.1,51.
100. A.V.XIV.2,59 et seq.
101. R.V.X.85,7,8.10.24.25.26.27.42 et seq.
102. R.V.X.85,28-30.35.

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perfect harmony and happiness are prayed for conjugal life.[103] The Vedic texts present a poetic pecture of an ideal family life in which newly-wedded wife was at once given a most respected position as the mispress of her husband's home, exercising authority over her-father-in-law, her husband's brothers, and his unmarriedé sisters.[104] The term patni regularly applied to the wife in the Brahmanas is indicative of her equal share in the social and religious side of her husband's life.[105] The term Jaya refers to her conjugal capacity .

The main object of a woman's marriage was the production of children, this being repeatedly asserted in the Rigveda and later.[106] In the Vedas abundance of sons is constantly prayed along with cattle and land. Such a desire was natural in a society which was mainly rural and agricultural. "There is very little evidence of the prevalence of the custom of Sati or widow burning in the Rigveda, though we may detect a semblance or reminiscence of this custom in X.18,8, where the widow is asked to descend from the funeral pyre of her dead husband on which she was first made to lie". Dr. A.S. Altekar thinks that 'the verse in question refers to women with their husbands living coming forward to annoint the corpse before it was consigned to flames, and containse no reference whatsoever to any widow immolating herself on her husband's

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103. R.V.VIII.31,5-9; X.34,11; 85,18.19.42; A.V.III.30; XIV.2,32.
104. R.V.X.85,46; Cf. Ait.Br.III.37; A.V.XIV.2,26.
105. Sat.Br.I.9,2,14.
106. R.V.I.91,20; 92,13; III.1,23; X.85,25.41.42.45; A.V.III.23,2; V.25,11; VI.11,2, etc.

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funeral pyre."[107] The Atharvaveda, however, shows that the funeral ritual of the Vedic age preserved some formalities reminiscent of the archaic custom of Sati.[108] The Vedic texts also tacitly admit the non-existence of the custom, by discussing the question of widow remarriage, which is permitted by some texts and prohibited by others .

The Vedic texts[109] sometimes refer to illegitimate love and to the abondonment of the offspring of such unions.[110] A protege of Indra is referred to as the "castaway" (paravrj or paravrikta) prosumably as the offspring of illegitimate love[111]. The 'son of a maiden'(Kumari-Putra) is mentioned in the Vajasaneyi Samhita[112] which refers also to illicit unions of Sudras and Aryas ,both male and female. Pischel and Geldner[113] hold that some passages of the Rigveda[114] refer to Hetairai, specially where mention is made of Ushas, who in their view is the characteristic Hetaira. Maddonell and Keith hold that 'there is little doubt that the 'dancer'(nrtu) referred to in one passage of the Rigveda was a Hetaira.'[115] They also think that when women are referred to as going to the Samana ,or 'place of meating', Hetaira are probably also meant.[116] But

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107. A.S.Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, 117.
108. A.V.XVIII.3,1.
109. R.V.I.134,3; III.53,8; VIII.17,7; A.V.XIV.1,36; XX.136,5; Ait. Br.I.27; Vaj.Sam.XXX.22; Taitt.Br.III.4,15,1.
110. R.V.II.29,1.
111. R.V.II.13,12; 15,7; IV.19,9; 30,16.
112. Vaj.Sam.XXX .6.
113. Cf.Vedische Studien, I, XXV, 196, 275, 299, 309; 2, 120, 154, 179, etc.
114. R.V.I.92,4.
115. Vedic Index I.481.
116. R.V.IV.58,8; VI.75,4; X.168,2; Perhaps also Vra in I.124,8; 126,5.

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it is difficult to accept this view. Female morality maintained a high standard and adultery was certainly regarded as a serious offence.[117] It is difficult to accept the view of Weber[118] and Ludwig[119] that the Aryans were indifferent in the matter of sexual morality. But as Delbruck[120] has clearly shown, the evidence is not convincing; the cited prescriptions[121] forbidding connection with another man's wife during a certain rite do not imply that such connections would otherwise be allowed. Though conjugal morality generally stood on a high level, infedility of the wife was certainly not unknown. The ritual of the (Varunapraghasa,[122] in which the wife of the sacrificer is questioned as regards her lovers, is evidently a rite to expiate unchastity (even platonic or purely mental) on the part of the wife. Yajnavalkya's assertion that no one cares whether a wife is 'unchaste' (parah-pumsa) or not is a mere mistranslation.[124] Further, it is pointed out that the metronymics in the lists of teachers in the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad may be explained as the relic of an ancient sociological feature rather than as evidence of recognized immorality.[125] Although the stories of Ahalya and Indra,[126]

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117. The Vedic Age, 391.
118. Indische Studien, 10, 83 et seq.
119. Translation of the Rigveda, 5, 573.
120. Vedic Index, I. 396.
121. Taitt. Sam., V. 6, 8, 3; Mait. Sam. III. 4, 7.
122. Mait. Sam., I, 10, 11; Sat. Br. II. 5, 2, 20.
123. Sat. Br. I. 3, 1, 21.
124. Vedic Index I. 397.
125. The Vedic Age, 453.
126. Cf. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, 65.

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the references in the Yajarveda to relations between the Arya man and the Sudra women and a spell given in the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad [128] to expiate relations with the wife of a Srotriya are not compatiable with a very high standard of morality but these maybe looked upon rather as exceptions that prove the rule of a high standard of ordinary sexual morality. "After all society is human, and while be should not entertain highly exaggerated notions of unfailing chastity during the age, disproportionate importance need not be attached to isolated cases, or peculiar and exceptional customs and institutions."[129]

In the Vedic age women enjoyed sufficient liberty. They moved about freely. They publicly attended feasts and dances and there are references to "women trooping to the festal meeting".[130] The hope was further expressed that the bride should be able to speak with composure in public assemblies[131] down to her old age. The presence of ladies in social and public gatherings was a normal feature in the Vedic times. It was quite welcome to society.[132] Whenever anything charming or graceful is to be described, Vedic poet usually think of the gaily attired lady, going out for a function, as the standard object of comparison.[133]

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126. Taitt.Sam., VII.4,19,2.3; Vaj.Sam.XXIII.30,31.
128. Brih.VI.4,11.
129. The Vedic Age, 453.
130. R.V.I.124,8.
131. R.V.X.85,26; A.V.XIV.1,21.
132. A.V.II.36,1.
133. R.V.IV.58,7; X.168,2.

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Thus at the dawn of civilization during the Vedic age the position of women on the whole was fairly satisfactory. In the vedic literature there are no doubt a few observations like "women's love is always fickle;"[134] "women can be easily won over by one who is handsome and can sing and dance well." After all the society is human and these remarks might have been prompted by an observation of the character of the ordinary women of uncultured classes. They may, even, reflect the light-hearted cynicism of the poets and the uncomplimentary references regarding women have therefore no general applicability.

Food And Drinks:

Self-sufficient food-producing agrarian economy was the basic feeture of the rural life in the Vedic age. One of the important feature which distinguished a rural area from the city is that the 'food need not be brought from out side.'[135] Self production of food is thus, a basic feature of rural life. Vedic Indians paid great importance to food. According to Taittiriya Upanisad it is from food that people are born. Of all created things food is the most important, hence it is called Sarvausadha or panacea.[136] Chandogya Upanisad enjoins to worship food for it enables a man to use all his faculties.[137] It further tells us that through food comes the end of all ignorance and bondage.[138] Food is called Anna because it is

134. R.V.VIII.33,17.
135. A.Ghosh ,The City In Early Historical India,18.
136. Taitt. Up.,II.2.
137. Chand.,VII.9,1.
138. Chand.,VII.26,2.

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eaten. It provides nutriment and hence it is called Pitu also[139]. Other words used in the sence of food in the Vedic literature are ida,[140] andhas[141], parimasa[142] and ahara.[143]

Among the cereals Yava seems to have occupied the most important place in the Rigveda[144] it appears to be generic term for any sort of "grain", and not merely 'barley.[144a] Later on it denoted barley.[145] It was ground into flour with a mill-stone and then mixed with milk or butter, and finally made into cakes. Vedic texts mention several type of dishes. Puro-das[146] was a sort of cake. Pakti [147] was also a kind of cake. Sweet cakes (apupa) of barley were also prepared.[148] Parched

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139. R.V.I.61,7;132,6;187,1;VI.20,4,etc.;A.V.IV.6,3;Taitt.Sam. V.7,2,4;Vaj.Sam.,II.20;XII.65;Air.B.R.I.13;Kath.Sam.XIII. 15;

140. R.V.III.1,23.

141. R.V.I.153,4;Vaj.Sam.III.20;

142. R.V.I.187,8.

143. Chand.,VII.26,2.

144. R.V.I.23,15;66,3;117,21;135,8;176,2;II.5,6;14,11;III.42, 7;V.85,3;VII.3,4;VIII.2,3;22,6;63,9;78,10;IX.68,4,etc.

144a. Vedic Index,II.187.

145. A.V.II.8,3;VI.30,1;50,1;91,1;141,2;142,1.2;VIII.7,20;IX. 1,22;6,14;XII.1,42;Taitt.Sam.,VI.2,10,3;4,10,5;Kath.Sam. XXV.10;XXVI.5;Mait.Sam.IV.3,2;Vaj.Sam.,V.26;XVIII.12; Taitt.Br.,I.8,4,1;Sat.Br.I.1,4,20;II.5,2,1;III.6,1,9; IV.2,1,11;XII.7,2,9;Chand.III.14,3,etc.;Kaus.Br.,IV.12.

146. R.V.III.28,2;41,3;52,2;IV.24,5;IV.32,16;VI.23,7;VIII.31, 2;Mait.Sam.III.10,2;Sayana on Ait.Br.I.1,2,9.

147. R.V.IV.24,5;24,7;25,6;28,7;VI.29,4;Vaj.Sam.,XXI.59. According to Sayana and Mahidhara Pakti means bake but as in the R.V.IV.24,5, both Pakti and Purodas are mentioned in the same hymn it seems unlikelythat the two words are Synonymous .It seems likely that Pakti was a liquid preparation served after Purodas.

148. Sat.Br.,IV.2,5,19.

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barley[149] was eaten either whole with Soma Juice[150] or ground into meal which was mixed with curds, clarified butter, Soma juice, water[151] or milk.[152] Sometimes a mess of barley was prepared by cooking it in water or milk.[153] Wheat (Go-dhuma) is not mentioned in the Rigveda. However, it is mentioned in other Samhitas.[154] It was used for preparing groats.[155] It might have been used as a substitute for barley. There is no definite mention of rice in the Rigveda. Expressions such as Dhanyabija[156] and Ksirapakam Odanam[157] might have had only the sense of a mess in general in the early Vedic age. However rice (Vrihi) is mentioned in the later Vedic texts.[158] Several

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149. Dhanah (Parched barley) R.V.I.16,2; III.35,3; 43,4; 52,5; IV.24, 7; VI.29,4; VIII.92,2; Vaj.Sam., XIX.21,22; Kaht.Sam., XI.2; Taitt. Sam. VI.5,11,4; III.1,10,2; A.V. XVIII.3,69; Taitt.Br. I.5,11,2; Sat. IV.4,3,9; XIII.2,1,4.

150. R.V. III.35,7; Taitt.Sam. VI.5,11.4; A.V. XVIII.4,43.

151. Saktu (Parched barley meal) R.V. X.71,2; vaj.Sam. XIX.21 et seq.; Taitt. Sam. VI.4,10,6; Sat.Br. I.6,3,16; IX.1,1,8; XII.9,1,5; Kath. Sam. XV.2; Karambha (parched barley meal with curds, clarified butter, Soma juice or water) R.V. I.187,6; III.52,7; VI.56,1; 57,2; VIII.102,2; A.V. IV.7,2.3; VI.16,1; Taitt. Sam. III.1,10,2; VI.5,11,4, etc.; Sat.Br. II.5,2,14; IV.2,4,18; Taitt.Br. I.5,11,2; Ait.Br. VIII.6; Vaj.Sam. XIX.22.

152. R.V. X.86,15; Taitt. Sam. VI.2,5,2; Kath. Sam. XI.2; Taitt. Ar. II.8,8; Kaus.Br. IV.13; Taitt. Sam. V.4,3,2.

153. R.V. VIII.69,4; VIII.77,10.

154. Mait. Sam. I.2,8; Vaj. Sam. XVIII.12; XIX.22,89; XXI.29, etc.; Sat. Br. V.2,2,6; XII.7,1,2; 2,9; Brih. VI.3,22.

155. Sat.Br. XII.9,1,5.

156. R.V. 53,13.7; Vedic Index II.345.

157. R.V. VIII.77,10.

158. Taitt. Sam. I.8,10; Kath. Sam. XV.5; A.V. VI.140,2; VII.7,20; IX.6,14; Sat.Br. V.5,5,9; Brih. VI.3,22; Chand. III.14,3.

159. Taitt. Sam. I.8,10,1; III.1,5,9; Kath. Sam. X.6.

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varieties of rice such as Krsnavrihi,[159] Suklavrihi,[160] Asudhanya[161] (aswift growing variety of rice) Hayana[162] (red rice growing in a year) and Mahavrihi[163] (perhaps the best quality of rice) are mentioned. Plasuka occurs in the sense of vrihi (rice).[164] A mess (Odana)[165] was prepared with rice cooked in water. Special variety are mentioned such as the 'milk-mess' (Ksiraudana)[166] Rice was also taken with curd (Dadhyodana),[167] Sesamum (Tilaudana),[168] Ghee (Ghrtaudana),[169] Mudga beans (Mudgaudana)[170] and meat (Mamsaudana).[171] Parched rice could be taken alone.[172] It could also be prepared into a drink after boiling.[173] Civda

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159. Taitt.Sam.I.8,10,1;III.1,5,9; Kath.Sam.X.6.
160. Kath.Sam.XI.5;Taitt.Sam.I.8,10,1;Jaiminiya Brahmana I.43; Chand.V.10,6,etc.
161. Taitt. Sam.I.8,10,1;Sat.V.3,3,2.
162. Mait.Sam.II.6,6;Kath.Sam.XV.5;Sat.Br.V.3,3,6;
163. Taitt.Sam.I.8,10;Ait.Br.VIII.16.
164. Sat.Br.V.3,3,2.
165. R.V.VIII.69,14;A.V.IV.14,8.
166. A.V.XIII.2,20;Sat.Br.II.5,3,4;XI.5,7,5;Brih.VI.4,14.
167. Brih.VI.4,15.
168. Brih.VI.4,17.
169. Sankhyayana Aranyaka,XII.8.
170. Ibid.
171. Ibid.XII.8;Sat.Br.XI.5,7,5;Brih.VI.4,18.
172. Parivapa.Taitt.Sam.III.1,10,1;VI.5,11,4;VII.2,10,4;Kath. Sam.XXXIV.11;Vaj.Sam.XIX.21-22;Ait.Br.II.24;Taitt.Br. I.5,11,4;Lajah.Maitt.Sam.III.11,2;Taitt.Br.II.6,4;III. 8,14.4;Vaj.Sam.XIX.13,81;21,42;Sat.Br.XII.8,2,7;Vaj.Sam. XIX.13.81;XXI.42,etc.
173. A.V.V.5,1.

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(a well known preparation of rice in eastern U.P. and Bihar) is perhaps denoted by the term 'Prbhuka.'[174] Preparation of rice with milk and sesamum was called Krsara.[175] Rice grain is also called Tandula.[176] The excavations at Maheshwaraaand Navdatoli have shown that people in this region were using wheat, rice, masura , masa, arhar, gram, pea, kulattha as early as about 1200 A.D.[177] while rice was a common food grain in the Madhyadesa about 800B.C., as rice husk was used in mud plaster at Hastinapur.[178] Aryans seem to have consumed several varieties of cereals such Priyangu (Panicum Italicum),[179] Anu(Panicum Miliaceum),[180] Syamaka (Panicum frumentaceum),[181] Nivara (wild rice),[182] Gavidhuka (Coix barbata),[183] Amba or Namba[184]

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174. Taitt.Br.III.8,14,3.
175. Sadvimsa Br.V.2;Vedic Index I.185.
176. A.V.X.9,26;XI.1,18;XII.3,18.29.30.
177. Journal of Gujrat Research Society,Vol.XXI.No.4/84;Culyure og Maheshwara and Navda Toli by H.D.Sankalia,332.
178. Ancient India No.XandXII(1954-55),P.129.
179. Taitt.Sam.II.2,11,4;Kath.Sam.X.11;Mait.Sam.II.1,8;Vaj. Sam.XVIII.12;Brih.VI.3,13.
180. Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Brih.VI.3,13;
181. Taitt.Sam.I.8,1,2;II.3,2,6;IV.7,4,2;Mait.Sam.II.11,4;II. 6,6;Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Kath.Sam.X.2,XV.5;Sat.Br.X.6,3,2.
182. Kath.Sam.XII.4;Mait.Sam.III.4,10;Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Sat. Br.V.1,4,14;3,3,5;Taitt.Br.I.3,6,7;Vedic Index.I.457.
183. Taitt.Sam.V.4,3,2;Sat.Br.V.2,4,13;XIV.1,2,29; II.4,11,13; IX.1,1,8; V.3,1,10;Taitt.Br.I.7,3,6;Mait.Sam.II.6,5;IV. 3,8;Vaj.Sam.XV.5.
184. Taitt.Sam.I.8,10,1;Kath.Sam.XV.5;Sat.Br.V.3,3,8;Mait. Sam.II.6,6.

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Upavaka[185](Wrightia antidy-senterica)-it was used in preparing groats[186]and gruel.[187]A variety of pulses are also mentioned-Masa (Kidney beans),Mudga (Phaseolus Mungo),[188]Musura(Lentils)[189], Khalakula(Dolichos Uniflorus),[190]Garmuta,[191]Khalva (Phaseolus Radiatus)[192], Kulmasa .[193]Some of the other grains mentioned in the Vedic Texts tirya,[194]Tila[195]Taila[196](Sesamum oil)Taula (Taila)[197]. We have already referred to a porridge made of grain,barley or sesame unhusked ,slightly parched andkneaded, called Karambha.[198]Fried grains of rice were known.Barley-gruel (yavagu)and decocations of other grains are also referred to.A dish of rice or barley in milk,was called Sthalipaka.[199]Pancaudana is an adjective in the Atharvaveda

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185. Vaj.Sam.XIX.22;90;XXI.30;Sat.Br.XXII.7,1,3;2,9;Mait.Sam. III.11,2.
186. Sat.Br.XII.9,1,5.
187. A.V.VI.140,2;XII.2,52;Taitt.Sam.V.1,8,1;VII.2,10,2;Kath. Sam.XII.7;XXXII.7;XXXVII.1;Mait.Sam.IV.3,2;II.6,6;Vaj. Sam.XVIII.12;Sat.I.1,1,10;Brih.VI.3,22.
188. Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Sankhyayana Aranyaka XII.8.
189. Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Brih.VI.3,22;Taitt.Br.III.8,14,6, mentions Masusya which seems to be a misreading for masura.
190. Brih.,VI.3,22.
191. Taitt. Sam.II.4,4,1.2;Kath.Sam.X.11;Mait.Sam.II.2,4.
192. A.V.II.31,1;V.23,8;Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Brih.VI.3,22.
193. Chand.I.10,2,7.
194. A.V.IV.7,3.
195. A.V.II.8,3;VI.140,2;XVIII.3,69;4,32;Taitt.Sam.VII.2,10, 2;Mait.Sam.IV.3,2;Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Sat.Br.IX.1,1,3,etc.
196. A.V.I.7,2;XX.136,16;Sankhayayana Aranyaka XI.4.
197. Vedic Index I.325.
198. R.V.I.187,16;III.52,7;VI.56,1;57,2;VIII.102,2;A.V.IV.7,2. 3;Taitt.Sam.III.1,10,2;VI.5,11,4;Sat.Br. II.5,2,14;IV. 2,4,18.
199. Brih.VI.4,18;Ait.Ar.III.2,4;Sankhayayana Aranyaka XI. 6,etc.

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meaning 'prepared with five rice messes'.[200] The cooking of five rice dishes is referred to in the same Samhita.[201]

In the Vedic civilization, which was predominantly pastoral and agricultural, milk was one of the principal ingredients of food. For milk we have several words such as Kshira,[202] Payas,[203] Go[204] etc. Vedic texts referred to such milk preparations as Ksiraudana (milk cooked with grain),[205] Mantha[206] (milk mixed with parched barley-meal (Saktu)),[207] Gavasira (milk mixed with soma juice)[208] and Rasasir.[209] Rigveda[210] refers to Mahisa denoting 'buffalo'. Aryans might have also used milk of buffaloes. The cows were milked thrice a day, early (pratar-doha) morning, in the afternoon (samgava) and in the evening (sayan-doha).[211] The first milking was productive, and the last two was scanty.[212] In the Vedic texts

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200- A.V.IV.14,7;IX.5,8 et seq.
201. A.V.IX.5,37.
202. R.V.I.109,3;164,7;VIII.2,9;IX.67,32;X.87,16.
203. R.V.I.153,4;I.121,5;VI.52,10.
204. R.V.I.33,10;151,8;181,8;IV.27,5;IX.46,4;71.5.
205. A.V.XIII.2,20;Sat.Br.II.5,3,4;XI.5,7,5;Brih.IV.13.
206. R.V.X.86,15;A.V.29,6;V.29,7;X.6,2;XVIII.4,42;XX.127,9; Taitt.Sam.I.8,5,1,etc.
207. Sat.IV.2,1,2;Vedic Index II.131.
208. R.V.I.137,1;187,9;II.41,3;III.32,2;42,1.7;VIII,52,10.
209. R.V.III.48,1.Sayana explains rasa as 'milk'.Rasasira as an epithet of Soma would indicate milk mixed with Soma.
210. R.V.V.29,7;VI.67,11;VIII.12,8;66,10;IX.87,7;X.28,10; 189,2;Vaj.Sam.XXIV.28,Etc.
211. Taitt. Sam.VII.5,3,1.
212. Taitt.Sam.I.4,9,2.

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we have references to Paatidhuk (fresh milk),[213] Srta[214] (boiled milk), Sara[215] (cream of boiled milk), Gharma[216] (hot milk), Payasya[217] (a mixture of sour milk and hot or cold fresh milk), Piyusa[218] (first milk of the cow after calving) and vajina[219] (a mixture of hot fresh milk with sour milk). Milk was curdled by mixing with it a little sour milk, pieces of a creeper called Putika,[220] bark of Palasa tree or kavala (Jujube). Dadhi, 'sour milk (curd) is repeatedly mentioned in the Vedic texts[222] and must have been widely used. Iry-asira[223] according to Sayana denotes mixture of curds (Dadhi), meal (saktu) and milk (payas). Curd mixed with Soma is described as Dadhyasir.[224] We have already referred to Karambha which was a mixture of barley meal with curd. The process of churning with churning stick was known.[225] The mixture of globules of butter

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213. Taitt. Sam. II.5,3,3; Kath. Sam. XVII.6; A.V. IX.4,4; Sat. Br. III.3,3,2; Panca. Br. IX.5,5; XVIII.4,2; Taitt. Br. II.7,2.

214. Sat. Br. III.2,2,10; VI.3,3,2.

215. Sat. Br. III.3,3,2.

216. R.V. I.119,2; 180,4; VII.70,2; VIII.9,4 etc. A.V. IV.1,2; Vaj. Sam. XXXVIII.6 etc. Cf. Nirukta, VI.32; XI.42; Zimmer, AL., 271; St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.; Vedic Index I.249.

217. Taitt. Sam. II.3,13,2; Taitt. Br. I.5,11,2; Ait. Br. II.22,4; Sat. Br. II.4,4,10.21; 5,1,12; 2,9, etc.

218. R.V. II.35,5, Vedic Index I.534.

219. Taitt. Sam. I.6,3,10; Vaj. Sam. IX.21,23; Sat. Br. II.4,4,21; III.3,3,2; IX.5,1,57 etc.

220. Kath. Sam. XXXIV.3; Sat. Br. XIV.1,1,12; Cf. IV.5,30,4; Panca. Br. VIII.4,1; IX.5,3 etc.; Taitt. Sam. II.5,3,5.

221. Taitt. Sam. II.5,3,5.

222. A.V. III.12,7; IV.34,6; Taitt. Sam. II.5,3,4; etc.; Panca. Br. XVIII.5,12; Kath. Sam. XXXIV.3.

223. R.V. V.27,5.

224. R.V. I.5,5; 137,2; V.51,7; VII.32,4.

225. R.V. I.28,4; Cf. Brih. VI.3.13.

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when the latter has not been removed, was called Prsadajya.[226] Particles of butter produced by churning were called Phanta.[227] Whey was called Mastua.[228] A kind of cheese (dadhanvat) is perhaps referred to in one passage of the Rigveda.[229] A mess of clotted curds was called Amiksa.[230] A preparation of curds (Dadhi) honey (Madhu) and Ajya was called Prsataka.[231] Ghrta, the modern Ghee or 'clarified butter' is repeatedly mentioned in the Vedas.[232] It was mixed with Soma juice.[233] It was used in frying apupas[234] and for dipping cakes in.[235] While solidified clarified butter was used by grown men, fresh was used by children. Aitareya Brahmana tells us that Navanita (fresh butter) is fit for anointing an embryo.[236] It may perhaps imply that

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226. R.V.X.90,8; Taitt.Sam.III.2,6,2; VI.3,9,6; 11,4; Sat.Br.II. 5,2,41; 4,2; III.8,4,8 etc.; Vedic Index.II.20.

227. Sat.III.1,3,8.

228. Sat.III.3,3,2.

229. R.V.VI.48,18; Vedic Index I.209.

230. A.V.X.9,13; Taitt.Sam.II.5,5,4; III.3,9,2; VI.2,5,5; Mait.Sam. II.1,9; Vaj.Sam., XIX.21 etc.

231. A.V.XX.134,2.

232. R.V.I.134,6; II.10,4; IV.10,6; 58,5.7.9; V.12,1; Vaj.Sam.II.22; A.V.III.13,5; Sat.Br.I.8,1,7 etc.

233. R.V.X.29,6.

234. R.V.III.52,7; X.45,9.

235. A.V.X.9,25.

236. Ajya (melted butter) Sayana on Aitareya Br.I.3; Ghrta (solidified clarified butter) Sayana on Ait.Br.I.3; Ayuta (slightly melted butter) Sayana on Ait.Br.I.3; Navanita (fresh butter) Sayana on Ait.Br.I.3; Taitt.Sam. II.3,10,1; VI.1,1,5; Kath.Sam.XI.7; Mait.Sam.II.3.4; Sat. Br.III.1,3,7; 1,3,8; V.3,2,6; Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana, III.3,3.

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fresh butter eaten by a pregnant women pleases the embryo in the womb.[237]

Meat also formed a part of the dietary of the Aryans in the Vedic age. Fire is called eater of ox and barren cows[238]. The ritual offerings of flesh, according to Maddonell and Keith, contemplates that gods will eat it, and again the Brahmins ate the offerings.[239] "Probably meat was eaten, as a rule, only on occasions of sacrifice, though such occasions were by no means rare, the domestic and the grand sacrifices being the order of the day."[240] A barren cow was slaughtered at the time of marriage[241] obviously for food. Atithigva also implies that cows were slain for guests.[242] In the later Vedic age it was customary to kill a big ox or a big goat to feed a distinguished guests[243] Sometimes a cow that miscarried or a sterile cow was also killed.[244] Many animals, cows, sheep, goats, and horses continued to be killed at sacrifices and the flesh of these sacrificed animals was eaten by the participants.[245] Fish is mentioned in the Rigveda[246] but it cannot be definitely said that it was consumed by the Aryans. Atharvaveda[247] refers to a kind of fish called 'Karvara' caught by a fisherman

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237. Vedic Index. I.437.
238. R.V.VIII.43,11.
239. Vedic Index II.145.
240. The Vedic Age, 393.
241. R.V.X.85,13.
242. Ait.Br.I.15.
243. A.V.III.21,6.Taitt.Sam.I.3,14,7;Sat.Br.III.4,1,2.
244. A.V.XII.4,10.
245. Mait.Sam.III.14;Vaj.Sam.XIII.47-51;Taitt.Sam.IV.2,10,1.4; Panca.Br.XXI.14.8;Ait.Br.VI.8;Sat.Br.IX.7,1,3.Gopatha Brahmana.III.13;III.18.
246. R.V.X.68,8.
247. A.V.X.4,19.

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(paunjistha)Many words such as Sauskala,[248] Pasin,[249] Baindra,[250] and Kaivarta[251] occur in the Vedic texts in the sense of fisherman. It makes us to infer that the Aryans had included fish in their diet by that time. Probably flesh of birds was also eaten.[252] The flesh of the ox, the sheep, and the goat was normally eaten after being roasted on spits(Sula)[253] or cooked in earthen were or metal pots.[255] Yusan, occuring in the description of horse sacrifice[256] denotes the broth which was made from the flesh of the sacrificial animal and was no doubt used as food.[257] Aryans relished a dish consisting of meat cooked with rice called Mamsaudana.[258] 'Kravya', 'raw flesh', is never mentioned in the Vedic literature as eaten by men. Demons alone are spoken of as consuming it.[259] Some notion of

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248. Vaj.Sam.XXX.16; Taitt.Br.III.4,12,1.
249. R.V.III.45,1; IX.73,4; A.V.XVII.1,8.
250. Vaj.Sam.XXX.16; Vedic Index II.74.
251. Taitt. Br.III.4,12,1.
252. R.V.I.92,10.
253. R.V.I.162,11; A.V.IX.162,11.
254. A-secana-R.V.IX. 162,13; Patra R.V.I.82,4; 110,5; 162,13; 175,1; II.37,4; VI .27,6; A.V.IV.17,4; VI.142,1; IX.6,17; XII.3,25.36; Taitt.Sam.V.1,6,2; VI.3,4,1; Vaj.Sam.XVI.62; XIX.86 etc.
255. The Vedic Age, 393.
256. R.V.V.23,7.8; Taitt.Sam.VI.3,11,1.4; Vaj.Sam.XXV.9.
257. Vedic Index.I.195.
258. Sat.Br.XI.5,7,5; Brih.VI.4,18; Sankhayayana Aranyaka, XII.8.
259. R.V.VII.104,2; X.27,2.19; 162,2; A.V.III.28,2; IV. 36,3; V. XX 29,10.

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pure and impure meat was present even in days of the Rigveda.It refers to a man compelled to eat dog's flesh in extreme destitution.However,he cooked it.[260]It appears that the killing of cows gradually came into disfavour even in the Rigvedic age.The cow,on account of its usefulness receives the epithet aghnya (not to be killed)in the Rigveda.[261]It is difficult to reconcile this with the eating of beef. V.M.Apte [262]tends to explain that it was flesh of the ox rather than the cows that was eaten,a distinction was definitely made .Further ,he points out that cow was eaten (if at all) at the sacrifices only.Even in the Rigveda only Vasas[263](barren cows)were sacrificed.Sterile cows could, perhaps,be killed a little more freely.[264]It appears that the killing of cows gradually came into disfavour . It is to be noted that the cow was on the road to acquire special sanctity even in the time of the Rigveda.[265]The word aghyna is found sixtten times in the Rigveda,as opposed to three instances of aghnya (masculine).[266]In the later Vedic period a feeling of revulsion against meat eating,specially beef,is found in

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260. R.V.IV.18,3.

261. R.V.I.164,27.

262. The Vedic Age,393.

263. R.V.II.7,5;VI.63,9;X.91,14 etc.;Vasa is frequently
264. qualified by anubandhya(Taitt.Sam.II.2,9,7;Kath.Sam.X. 1,)to be bound for slaughtering;the economy of killing a barren cow probably tended to produce the sense of 'barren'in the word.

264. A.V.XII.4,10.

265. Vedic Index II.146.

266. Ibid.f.n.13.

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almost all the texts.[267] The Atharvaveda regards taking of beef as an offence against forefather's (Pitrs).[268] Brhaspati, it is said, takes away the progeny of those who consume a cow.[269] Sometimes meat eating was forbidden when a man was performing a vow.[270] Its use is disapproved, as in a passage of the Atharvaveda, where meat is classed with Sura, or intoxicating liquor, as a bad thing.[271]

Thus, although there was no general objection for non-vegetarian diet, vegetarianism was not altogether unknown even to the Rigvedic Aryans. A devout offering of prays or of fuel stick or cooked food was considered as good as a more solemn sacrifice.[272] A hymn addressed to Pitu (nutriment) mentions all the articles of food except meat.[273]

In the Vedas Madhu denotes any thing sweet used as food.[274] It is also used for honey.[275] It was taken out from two kinds of bees, one big Arangara and the other small Saragha.[276] The latter kind was considered better than the

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267. Sat.Br.IIII.1,2,21.
268. A.V.V.19,5.
269. A.V.XII.4,38.
270. Sat.Br.XIV.1,1,29.
271. A.V.VI.70,1. Cf. Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, 493.
272. R.V.VIII.19,5.
273. R.V.I.187,8-10; Also R.V.I.61,7; 132,6; 187,1; VI.20,4, etc.; A.V.IV.6,3; Taitt.Sam.V.2,7,4; Vaj.Sam.II.20; XII.65; Ait. Br.I.13.
274. R.V.I.90,6.8; 187,2; III.1,8; IV.34,2; 42,2; Vaj.Sam.XXXVIII. 10, etc.; A.V.VI.69,1; IX.1,22; Taitt.Br.III.1,2,4; 1,2,13 etc.
275. R.V.VIII.4,8; IV.45,4; VII.32,2; VIII.24,20; A.V.IX.1,17.19; Taitt. Sam.VII.5,10,1; Mait.Sam.IV.9,7; Ait.Br.VII.18; VIII.5.20; Sat.Br.I.6,2,1.2; XI.5,4,18; Brih.II.5,1; Chand. VI.9,1 etc.
276. R.V.X.106,10.

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Former.[277] It was used to sweeten food articles such as Apupas.[278] Sugarcane (Iksu)[279] is first mentioned in the Atharvaveda. Mr.B.Majumdar thinks that the Kusara[280] in the Rigveda refers to Sugarcane. Salt is not mentioned in the Rigveda. Since the early Vedic Aryans originally resided in the region of Sapta-Sindhua, where a salt range existed, we cannot conclude that the consumption of salt was unknown in the Rigvedic times. In the rest of the Vedic literature salt (Lavana) is frequently mentioned.[281]

Sesame was used as a food article.[282] The two common dishes were a gruel[283] and a porridge.[284] A wild variety of sesame was also used in preparing a porridge.[285] Sesame oil is mentioned in the Atharvaveda[286] Baja may referred to some sort of mustard plant (Sarsapa) in the Atharvaveda.[287] It is clearly mentioned in the Brahmanas and Upanisadas.[288] The use

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277. Sat.Br.III.11,3,13.
278. A.V.XVIII.4,22.
279. A.V.I.34,5.
280. R.V.I.191,3.
281. A.V.VII.76,1; Jaiminiya Upanisada, III.17,3; Cand., IV.17,7; Gopatha Brahmana I.14; Brih.II.4,12.
282. Vaj.Sam.
283. A.V.IV.7,3.
284. Brih.VI.4,16.
285. Taitt. Sam.V.4,3,2; Sat.Br.IX.1,1,3.
286. A.V.XX.136,16.
287. A.V.VIII.6,3.6.7.24; Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 494.
288. Sadvimsa Brahmana, V.2; Chand.III.14,3; Sankhayana Srauta Sutra, IV.15,8, etc.

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of oil was perhaps common with the non-Aryans than the Aryans.[289]

Fruits and vegetables also formed a part of Aryan dietary. The word phala (fruit) occurs in the Rigveda[290] and later.[291] Fruits such as Badara[292] (a large sized jujube), Kuvala[293] (an average sized soft jujube), Karkandhu[294] (a small sized jujube), Bilva[295] (wood apple-Aigle marmelos), Kharjura[296] (Phoen-isilvestris), Mango,[297] Amalaka[298] (Myrobalan fruit), Amala[299] are mentioned in the Vedic texts.[300] Among the vegetables Urvaruka[301] (cucumber), bisa[302] (lotus stalks), Saluka[303] (edible roots of lotus), Alabu[304] (bottle-gourd-Lagenaria vulgaris), Saphaka[305] (an edible water plant or fruit,

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289. A.V.I.7,2.
290. R.V.III.45,4;X.146,5.
291. A.V.VI.124,2;Taitt.Sam.VII.3,14,1;Vaj.Sam.X.13;Sat.Br. XIII.4,4,8;Brih.VI.4,1,etc.
292. Kath.Sam.XII.10;Mait.Sam.III.11,2;Vaj.Sam.XIX.22.90; XXI.30;Taitt.Br.I.8,5,1;Sat.Br.V.5,4,10;XII.7,1,3; 9,1,8,etc.;Jaiminiya Brahmana II.156,5.
293. Mait.Sam.III.11,2;Vaj.Sam.XIX.22,89;XXI.29;Sat.Br.V. 5,4,10.
294. Kath.Sam.XII.10;Mait.Sam.III.11,2;Vaj.Sam.XIX.23,91; XXI.32;XXIV.2,;Sat.Br.V.5,4,10;XII.7,2,9;9,1,5,etc Jaiminiya Brahmana,II.156,5.
295. A.V.XX.136,13; Ait.Br.II.1;Sat.Br.XIII.4,4,8,etc.Cf. Mait.Sam.III.9,3.
296. Kath.Sam.XI.10;XXXV.71;Taitt.Sam.II.4,9,2.
297. Sat.Br.XIV.7,1,41.
298. Chand.VII.3,1.
299. Jaiminiya Upanisada Brahmana,I.38,6.
300. Cf.Vedic Index I.59.
301. A.V.VI.14,2;Maitt Sam.I.10,4;Taitt.Sam.I.8,6,2.
302. A.V.IV.34,5;Ait.Br.V.30;Sankhayana Aranyaka,XI.4.
303. A.V.IV.35,5.
304. A.V.VIII.10,29.30;XX.132,1.2.Cf.Mait.Sam.IV.2,13.
305. A.V.IV.34,5.

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perhaps a water ~~plant~~ nut),[306] Mulali[307](an edible part of lotus-Nymphaaea esculenta),[308] Avaka[309](Blyxa octandra), Kapittha[310](Ferronia Limonia), Andika[311](Nymphae alba), Madugha(a sweet herb),[312] Asvabala,[313] Madhuka[314](bassia Latif olia), Usama,[315] Praprotha,[316] and Adara[317] are mentioned in the Vedic texts.

Soma was the most popular inebriating drink of the Aryans.[318] The whole of ninth mandala of the Rigveda, and six hymns in other mandalas, are devoted to its praise. The plant grew on the mountains,[319] that of Mujavanta being sepcially renowned. "The Soma used in India certainly grew on mountains, probably in the Himalayan high lands of Kashmir."[320]

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306. Vedic Index. II. 354.
307. A.V. IV. 34, 5.
308. Vedic Index II. 168.
309. A.V. VIII. 7, 9; 37, 8-10; Taitt. Sam. IV. 6, 1, 1; V. 4, 1, 2; 4, 3; Vaj. Sam. XVII. 4; XXV. 1, Mait. Sam. II. 10, 1; Sat. Br. VII. 5, 1, 11; VIII. 3, 2, 5; IX. 1, 2, 20; XIII. 8, 3, 13; A.V. IV. 37, 8.
310. A.V. IV. 2, 8.
311. A.V. IV. 35, 5; IV. 17, 16.
312. A.V. I. 34, 4; VI. 102, 3.
313. Sat. Br. III. 4, 1, 17; III. 6, 3, 10.
314. A.V. I. 34, 5.
315. Sat. Br. III. 4, 3, 13; IV. 2, 5, 15.
316. Panca. Br. VIII. 4, 1.
317. Sat. Br. IV. 5, 10, 4; It is identified with Putika metioned also in Sat. Br. XIV. 1, 2, 12.
318. R.V. IX. 12, 7.
319. R.V. I. 93, 6; III. 48, 2; V. 36, 2; 43, 4; 85, 2; IX. 81, 1; 46, 1; 71, 4; 82, 3; A.V. III. 21, 10. So in the Avesta, Yasna, X. 4, etc.
320. Zenaide A. Rogozin, Vedic India, 170.

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Nevertheless ,little is actually known of the plant.It is described as having hanging bough.[321] Its twigs or shoots are described as brown(babhru),[322] ruddy(aruna),[323] or tawny(hari).[324] Its shoots are called amsu,[325] while the plant as a whole is called amdhas,[326] which also denotes the juice.[327] Parvan is the stem.[328] Kṣip, [329] 'finger', is used as the designation of the shoots.Its shoot is also called Vaksana[330] and Vana.[331] Hagozin describes Soma plant as having "hanging bough,bare leaves along withe atalks , of light,ruddy color ("golden"),with knotty joints, containing,in a fibrous,cane like outer rind, and abundance of milky ,acid,and slightly astringent sap or juice.It is this juice which,duly pressed out,mixed with other ingredients and fermented,yields the intoxicating sacrificial beverage."[332]

The Soma has been identified with Sarcostemma viminale or the Asclepias acida(=Sarcostemma brevistigma).[333]

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321. R.V.III.53,14.Cf.Naicasakha.
322. Panca.Br.IX.5,3.
323. R.V.VII.98,1;X.94,3;144,5.Cf.Sat.Br.IV.5,10,1,et seq.
324. R.V.IX.92,1.
325. R.V.I.168,3;III.48,2,etc.
326. R.V.I.28,7;III.48,1;IV.6,1,etc.
327. R.V.II.24,1;19,1;35,1;etc.
328. R.V.I.9,1.
329. R.V.IX.79,4.
330. R.V.VIII.1,17.
331. R.V.IV.24,9;IX.50,1.
332. Z.A.Hagozin,Vedic India,172.
333. Vedic Index II.475.

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Roth identifies it with Sarcostemma acidum.[334] According to Watt Soma was Afghan grape.[335] Rice thought it to be sugarcane.[336] Max-Muller and Rajendra Lal Mitra held that it was a species of hop. It is very probable that the plan cannot now be indentified.[337] The process of extracting the juice is described in detail. They were sometimes pounded on a mortar with a pestle.[338] Before crushing, the plant was washed in water.[339] In order that it may yield copious juice, water was sprinkled on the stalks.[340] It was pounded with both hands.[341] Women sang songs when they squeezed the juice of the plant with their fingers.[342] It was purified by being pressed through a sieve (Pavitra).[343] The pressed juice, in the act of passing through the filter of the sheep's wool, is called pavamana[344] ("flowing clear". The juice thus purified and as yet unmixed is called Sukra[345] or Suchi[346] (bright). This filtered Soma, next flows into jars (Kalasa) or vats (drona) where it is mixed with water and milk to sweeten it. The process of

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334. Vedic Index II.475.
335. Ibid.
336. Ibid.
337. Ibid.
338. R.V.I.83,6.
339. R.V.IX.65,6; Cf.IX.16,2.
340. R.V.IX.74,9; A.V.IX.6,16.
341. R.V.IX.72,5.
342. R.V.IX.66,8.
343. R.V.I.28,9; III.36,7; VIII.33,1; 109,9, etc.; A.V.VI.124,3; IX.6,16; XII.1,30; 3,3.14.25, etc.
344. Taitt.Sam.VII.5,20,1; Vaj.Sam.VI.17; Ait.Br.I.7.
345. R.V.I.137,1; III.32,2; VIII.2,10, etc.
346. R.V.I.5,5; 30,2; VIII.2,9, etc.

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preparing Soma is described in Vedic texts repeatedly, but in such fanciful and often enigmatical ways that it is not possible to describe it in uniform and exact details. The Soma juice is described as brown (babhru),[347] tawny (hari),[348] or ruddy (Aruna)[349] and as having a fragrant smell, at least as a rule. It was sometimes mixed with milk (Gavasir),[350] curd or sour milk (dadhyasir),[351] or grain (Yavasir).[352] Other preparation with which it was mixed were Karambha, Dhanah, Apupa, Pakti, Saktu, Water and honey.[353] Vedic texts refer to Abhi-sri[354] (mixture of Soma with milk), Try-asira,[355] (Soma mixed with milk curd and barley),[356] Suda[357] (according to Pischel)[358] it denoted what is added to Soma to make it fit for use) Suda-dohas (admixture of Soma with milk).[359] According to Vedic descriptions Soma juice was sweet and delicious in taste.[360] It was believed that it inspired

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347. R.V.IX.33,2;63,4.6.
348. R.V.IX.3,9;7,6;65,8.12.25, etc.
349. R.V.IX.40,2;45,3.
350. R.V.I.137,1;187,9;II.41,3;III.32,2;42,1.7;VIII.52,10; 101,10.
351. R.V.I.5,5;137,2;V.51.7;VII.32,4.
352. R.V.I.187,9;II.22,1;III.42,7;VIII.94,4.
353. R.V.VIII.91,2;III.52,7;VI.29,4;V.27,5;Madhava on R.V.V. 27,5;IX.74,9;IX.67,32.
354. R.V.IX.79,5.
355. R.V.V.27,5.Cf.VIII.2,7.
356. Oldenberg, S.B.E., 46,422.
357. R.V.VI.36,3;IX.97,4;X.61,2.
358. Vedische Studien, 1,72,73.
359. Ibid.
360 R.V.VI.47,3.

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confidence, courage, faith, and self-trust and bestowed powers of eloquence and immortality.[361] It is called amrita, the "draught of immortality. It was believed that Soma has curative power also. A strong mixture of Soma juice called Pancadasa is also mentioned.[362] Sayana identified Panta[363] with Soma .

Another beverage of the Vedic period was Sura which was prepared from fermented barley or wild paddy after distillation[364]. But while the use of Soma was highly commended that of Sura was condemned. Its use, it is said, gave rise to broils.[365] It was a popular drink of the common man. It is often condemned as leading to quarrels and as seducing men from the path of virtue like dicing and meat eating.[366] Another common intoxicating drink distinct from both Sura and Soma was Pari-srut.[367] According to Mahidhara,[368] the liquor was made from flowers (Puspa). The Yajuraveda Samhitas mention a beverage called masara, which appears to have been a mixture of rice and syamaka with grass and parched barley etc.[369] Again, Kilala was also a sweet drink prepared from

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361. R.V.VI.47,3; IX.96,5; VIII.48,12.
362. R.V.X.27,2.
363. R.V.I.122,1; 155,1; VIII.92,1; IX.65,28; X.88,1.
364. R.V.VIII.2,12; I.116,7; X.131,4.5; VII.86,6; VIII.21,14; Mait.Sam.I.2,6; II.4,2; IV.2,1; Taitt.Sam.I.3,3,2; Sat. Br.XII.7,3,8; I.6,3,2; Chand.V.10,9.
365. R.V.VIII.2,12; 21,14; Cf.Kath.Sam.XIV.6; Sat.Br.I.6,3,4; Mait.Sam.II.4,2, etc.
366. A.V.VI.70,1.
367. A.V.III.3,12; XX.127,9; Sat.Br.V.1,2,14; XII.9,1,1.
368. Mahidhara on Waj.Sam.II.34.
369. Vaj.Sam.XIX.14,82; Mait.Sam.III.11,2,9; Taitt.Br.II.6,11,4.

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cereals.[370] It was a drink of somewhat the same nature as Sura, possibily, as Zimmer[371] suggests, a kind of rum.

As we have already seen Vedic Aryans laid great stress on the virtue of hospitality. It was considered asin to take food without feeding a hungry person.[372] Merits of feeding a guest are referred to in the Vedic texts.[373] Emphasis was laid on the purity of food on which depended the proper mental make up of a person.[374] Practice of washing hands before taking meals and after meals was common.[375] The food cooked by women in her courses was regarded as impure.[376] Vedic Indians used to recite a prayer to food before they took their meals.[377]

Dress And Decorations:

From the study of Vedic literature, it is clear that the Vedic Aryans were well-dressed and fond of decorations. The dress (Vasana[378] or Vastra)[379] mainly consisted of a lower garment(vasas)[380] and an overgarment or upper garment(Adhivasa)[381].

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370. A.V.IV.11,10;VI.69,1;X.6,25;XII.1,59;Taitt.Br.II.6,12,13; Taitt.Sam.II.7.12;III.11,3.4;Vaj.Sam.II.34;III.43;XX. 65;XXX.11,etc.
371. Zimmer,AL.,281;Vedic Index I.160.
372. R.V.X.117,2.
373. A.V.IX.6,24;IX.6,13;Sat.Br.VII.3,2,1;Ait.Br.I.1,1;Taitt. Up.I.22;III.10;Sat.Br.XII.1,3,4;III.4,1,2.
374. Chand.VII.26,2.
375. Brih.VI.1,14;Chand.V.2,2.
376. Taitt.Sam.II.5,1,5-6;Ait.Br.VII.9.
377. R.V.I.187,2.
378. R.V.I.95,7;Chand.VIII.8,5;Kaus.Up.II.15;Nirukta,VIII.9 etc.
379. R.V.I.26,1;134,4;III.39,2;V.29,15;A.V.V.1,3;IX.5,25;XII. 3,21.
380. R.V.VIII.2,16.
381. R.V.I.140,9;162,16;X.5,4;Sat.Br.V.3,5,22;4,4,3 etc. Adhivastra:Upari-nihita-vastra-Sayana on R.V.VIII.26,13.

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In the later Vedic age, Nivi[382] or undergarment came to be used in addition. The Maruts wear dear skins,[383] and a muni is clad in leather garment (Mala)[384] or soiled garments.[385] A garment of Kusa grass is mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana.[387]

Wollen clothing was also in use. There are references to woollen garments such as Samulya[388] (wollen garment worn at night) and Samula (wollen shirt).[389] Urna, 'wool' is very frequently mentioned in the Vedas.[390] Urna-Sutra[391] (woollen thread) is mentioned in the later Vedic texts, but Urna denoted not merely sheep's wool but probably goat's hair also. However clothes were generally woven of sheep's wool. A garment of Kusa grass is mentioned in the Satapatha Brahmana[392] but it is very doubtful that such dresses were normally worn. Ksauma,

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382. R.V.VIII.2,16; XIV.2,50; VIII.6,20; Taitt.Sam.VI.1,1,3; Vaj. Sam.IV.10; Sat.Br.I.3,3,6; III.2,1,5 etc. A.V.VII.6,20; VIII. 2.16; VIII.6,20; XIV.2,59.

383. R.V.I.166,10.

384. R.V.X.136,2.

385. A.V.VI.115,3; VII.89,3; X.5,24 etc.; Vedic Index II.137.

386. Sat.Br.III.9,1,12.

387. Sat.Br.V.2,1,8.

388. R.V.X.85,29.

389. Jaiminiya Upanisada Brahmana I.38,4.

390. R.V.IV.22,2; V.52,9; Sat.Br.XII.5,1,13; V,2,10, etc. Urnayu, 'Woolly', Vaj.Sam.XIII.50; Panca.Br.XII.11,10; forfurther references see Veidc Index I.106. Urnawwti, R.V.X.75,8; Gandhari, R.V.I.126,7; for use of ram's wool, and the skin of beasts, quadruped and biped, with reference to the use of its wool as clothing, Vja.Sam.XIII.50.

391. Mait.Sam.III.11,9; Kath.Sam.XXXVIII.3;

392. Sat.Br.V.2,1,8.

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'a linen garment'is mentioned in the Maitrayani Samhita.[393] Silken garments were also worn.Kausumoha-paridhana,a silken garments is referred to in the Sankhayana Aranyaka.[394] According to Goldstucker[395] and eggeling[396] Tarpya[397] also denotes 'silken garment.'The frequent use of the variant terms for 'warp(Tantra)[398] and 'woof'(Otu)[399] shows great development of the art of weaving garments.The work of weaving was probably the special care of women.[400] Vedic texts have a variety of terms denoting different types of garments such as Atka,[401] Drapi[402](a sort of mantle or cloak)Pesas[403](an embriodered

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393. Mait.Sam.III.6,7.

394. Sankhayana Aranyaka,XI.4.

395. Dictionary,S.V.abhisecaniya.

396. S.B.E.,41,85,n.1.

397. A.V.XVIII.4,31;Taitt.Sam.II.4,11,6;Taitt.Br.I.37,7,1; 7,6,4;Panca.Br.XXI.1;Sat.Br.V.3,2,20.

398. R.V.X.71,9;A.V.X.7,42;Taitt.Br.II.5,5,3;Panca.Br,X.5; Sat.Br.XIV.2,2,22.for further references See Vedic Index, I.123;(Otu)and I.298,299(Tantra);I.302(Tasara);I.502 (Paryasa-woof)II.45,46 (Pracinatana-wrap)II.29(Praghata); II134 (Mayukha);II.43(Vayitri-weaver);I.123 (Vaya-weaver); I.123 (Veman-loom)II.450 (Siri-weaver).

399. R.V.VI.9,2.3;A.V.XIV.2,51;Taitt.Sam.VI.1,1,4.

400. A.V.X.7,42;XIV.2,5;Cf.R.V.I.92,3;Vayitri,Panca.Br.I.8,9; Vedic Index II.43.

401. R.V.I.95,7;II.35,14;IV.18,5;V.55,6;74,5;VI.29,3;VIII.41,7; IX.101,14;107,13;Samaveda,II.1193;Zimmer,AL.262,297thinks that Atka in R.V.X.49,3;99,9 may denote'coat of mail.'

402. R.V.I.25,13;116,10;IV.53,2;IX.68,14;100,9;A.V.III.13,1.

403. R.V.II.3,6;IV.36,7;VII.34,11;42,1;Vaj.Sam. XIX.82,89; XX.40;Ait.Br.III.10 etc.

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garment perhaps worn by female dancers),404 Vadhuya[405] (bridal garment),Suvasana [406](splendid garment),Ushnisha[407] (turban),Dursa[408](a kind of woven cloth or vesture),Barasi[409] (denoting some kind of garment),Pandva[410](unbleached woollen garment),Vata-pana[411](some sort of garment as protection against wind),Maha-Rajana[412](a garment dyed with saffron); Candataka [413](an undergarment worn by women);Pratidhi[414] (a part of women's dress),Upavasana[415](veil or bodice for women?),Vavrivasa[416](a breast cover?) etc. There is no clear evidence of any difference between male and female costumes. Turban (Ushnisha) was worn by men as well as by women.[417] We have evidence of fashionable ornamental or embroidered garments

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404. R.V.I.92,4.5;II.3,6,etc.
405. R.V.X.85,34;A.V.XIV.2,41.
406. R.V.VI.51,4;IX.97,50.
407. Ait.Br.VI.1;Sat.Br.III.3,2,3;IV.5,2,7;XIV.2,2,4;Kath.Sam. XIII.10;A.V.XV.2,1;Panca.Br.XVII.1,14;Cf.XVI.6,13;Sat. Br.VI.3,5,23;Mait.Sam.IV.4,3,
408. A.V.IV.7,6;VIII.6,11.
409. Kath.Sam.XV.4;Panca.Br.XVIII.9,16;XXI.3,4.
410. Sat.Br.V.3,5,21.
411. Taitt.Sam.VI.1,1,3.
412. Brih.II.3.10.
413. Sat.Br.V.2,1,8.
414. A.V.XIV.1,8.
415. A.V.XIV.2,49.
416. A.V.VII.6,2.
417. Sat.Br.XIV.2,1,8.

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also the Marutas are described as wearing mantles adorned with gold (hiranyayan atkan).[418] We have references to trimming, fringe, (Tusa)[419] or border (dasa[420] or sic[421]) of the clothes. The making of embroidered garment was a regular occupation of women who is called 'Pesas-Kari' in the Yajuraveda[422]. From the manner of wearing the sacred thread outside, can be inferred the manner of wearing the overgatment which probably passed over the left shoulder and under the right arm. Vedic Indians assumed that non except the ascetics could go naked. The Satapatha Brahmana[423] has an interesting legend to explain why men alone wear clothes. Thus, in the Vedic age people wore adequate and costly clothings, which represented their good taste as well as fanciful nature and material prosperity.

With the traditional oriental fondness of ornaments, Aryans both men and women decorated themselves with ornaments. The Karna-sobhana[424] was "an ornament of the ear" apparently for the use of men.[425] references to some deity as 'gold-eared'

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418. R.V.V.55,6.
419. Taitt.Sam.I.8,1,1;II.4,9,4;VI.1,1,3;Kath.Sam.XXIII.1; Taitt. Br.I.6,1,8;Panca.Br.XVII.1,etc.
420. Sat. Br.III.3,2,9.
421. R.V.III.53,2.
422. Vaj.Sam.XXX.9;Tait.Br.IIII 4,5,1.
423. Sat.Br.XI.5,1,1.
424. R.V.VIII.78,3.
425. Vedic Index I.140.

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(haranyakarna)[426] may suggest that it was a gold ornaments. The words 'Chakra'[427] and 'hiranya-karna'[428] may also denote ear-rings.[429] In the later Vedic texts it is denoted by such words as Pravepa'[430] and 'Praverta',[431] 'Prakash'[432] also. The 'Kurira'[433] was a kind of head ornament worn by females. Other such ornaments were 'Srag'[434] (a sort of garland for decorating head), "Stupa",[435] Opasa'[436] Sipra,[437] 'Hiranya Sipra,[438] Hari Sipra'[439] 'Srmga'[440] etc. 'Nyocani[441] (a sort of waist-band) was also a bride's ornament. It also denoted by terms such as 'Varuna-pasa',[442] 'Hirnya-Vartani',[443] 'Rasana',[444] 'Ninah',[445] and 'Mekhala',[446]

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426. R.V.I.122,14.
427. R.V.X.85,20.
428. R.V.I.122,14.
429. Dr.Rai Govindchandra, Vaidika Yuga Ke Bhartiya Abhusana, 21.
430. Ibid, 47; Mait.Sam.IV.4,8; Vedic Index II.44.
431. Ibid, 47; A.V.XV.2,5. Cf. Sat.Br.III.5,3,16.
432. Tandya Br.XVIII.9,10; Taitt.Br.I.8,2,3; Sat.Br.V.4,5,22.
433. R.V.X.85,8.
434. R.V.IV.38,6; V.53,4; VIII.47,15; 56,3; X.148,3.
435. R.V.I.24,7; VII.2,1; Taitt-Sam.III.3,6,5; Panca.Br.XIII.4,4; Vaj.Sam.II.2; XXV.2; Sat.Br.I.3,3,5; III.5,3,4.
436. R.V.I.173,6; VIII.14,5; IX.71,1; X.85,8; A.V.VI.138,1.2; IX. 3,8; Panca.Br.IV.1,1.
437. R.V.V.54,11; VIII.7,25.
438. R.V.II.34,3.
439. R.V.II.2,3; VI.25,9.
440. R.V.I.140,6; 163,11; II.39,3; III.8,10, etc. A.V.IX.4,17; XIX. 36,2; II.32,6; VIII.6,16; Ait.Br.VI.18.
441. R.V.X.85,6; A.V.XIV.1,7.
442. R.V.X.85,24; VI.74,4; VII.88,7; A.V.IV.16,6; Taitt.Sam.II. 2,5,1.
443. R.V.V.75,2.3; VIII.8,1.
444. Vaj.Saml.30; XI.59; XXXVIII.1; Taitt.Sam.I.1,2,2; IV.1,5,4; Kath.Sam.I.2; XVI.5; XIX.6, etc.; Sat.Br.VI.2,2,25; VI.5,2,11; VI.5,2,13.
445. A.V.XIX.57,4.
446. A.V.VI.133,1; II.3,45; Taitt.Sam.I.3,3,5; VI.2,2,7; Cath.Sam. XXIII.4; Maitt.Sam.III.6,7.

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Several terms are used for armlets.It is denoted by Khadi,[447] Parihasta,[448] Bhuji,[449] Vrsa-Khadi,[450] Hiranya-Bahu,[451] Pratisara,[452] and Vala.[453] Rings must have been worn by men as well as by women.It is denoted by words Khadi-hasta,[454] Anuka,[455] and Hiranya-Pani,.[456] Nishka[457] was a gold ornament worn on the neck.Rukma[458] must have been a sort of necklace. Terms such as Rukma-Vaksas[459] and Rukma-pasa[460] would suggest it to be a necklace with pendant resting on the breast.Mani was some kind of jewel[461](whether 'pearl'[462] or 'diamond'[463] is not certain)worn round the neckas is indicated by the epithet

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447. R.V.I.166,9;VII.56,13;Ait.Br.III.5;Sat.Br.III.6,1,7.
448. A.V.VI.8,1-3.
449. R.V.VIII.8,2.
450. R.V.I.64,10.
451. Vaj.Sam.XVI.17.
452. A.V.II.11,2;IV.40,1;VIII.5,1-4.
453. Ait.Br.VI.7.
454. R.V.I.168,3.
455. R.V.V.33,9.
456. R.V.I.35,9;VajSam.XXII.10;A.V.II.36,7;Sat.Br.III.3,2,2.
457. R.VI126,2;II.33,10;V.19,3;VIII.47,15;A.V.V.14,3;VII.99, 1;XX.131,8;V.17,14;Chand.IV.2,1,2;V.13,2; Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana XIII.4,1,7; Ait.Br.VIII.22;Panca.Br. XVII.1,14;Sat.Br.XIII.4,1,7.
458. R.V.I.166,10;IV.10,5;V.53,4;56,1.Cf.Taitt.Sam.II.3,2,3; V.1,10,3;Vaj.Sam.XIII.40;A.V.XIV.2,30;Sat.Br.III.5,1,20; 4,1,13;Taitt.Br.I.8,2,3;I.8,2,1;Ait.Br.VIII.21,3.
459. R.V.II.34,2.8;V.55,1;57,5;
460. Sat.Br.VI.7,1,7;VI.7,1,27;VII.2,2,15;etc.
461. R.V.I.33,8;A.V.29,1;II.4,1.2;VIII.5,1 et seq.
462. St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.
463. ~~R.V.~~ Cf. Zimmer,AL.53.

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Mani-griva[464] (Having a jewel on the neck). Men also wore garlands.[465] The Taittiriya Samhita mentions an ornament (alamkara) called Sthagara, probably made of fragrant substance. Anklets were known as Khadi-patsu.[466] Further, Hiranyapava may also denote an ornament worn in the legs. Aryans wore ornaments made of gold,[467] silver,[468] jewel,[469] pearl,[470] pearl-shell (Sankha),[471] Mukta (pearl),[472] Vi-mukta (pearl),[473] Vaidurya (beryl)[474] etc. The hair were kept combed and oiled. Plaits were used in dressing the hair, specially by women.[475] A maiden is said to have had her hair made in four plaits.[476] It seems that men also wore their hair plaited or braided.[477] Pulasti or Pulastin in the Yajuraveda Samhitas[477a] denotes 'wearing the hair plain' as opposed to Kapardin, 'wearing the hair in braids!

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464. R.V.I.122,14; Vedic Index II.120.
465. R.V.IV.38,6; V.53,4, etc.
466. R.V.IX.86,43.
467. R.V.I.43,5; III.34,9; IV.10,6; 17,11 etc.; A.V.I.9,2; II.36, 7; V.28,6; VI.38,2; Vaj.Sam.XV.50; Sat.Br.II.1,1,5; Vedic Index, Hiranya, II.504,505; Suvarna-Taitt.Sam.I.4,7,4; A.V. XV.1,2; Taitt.Br.III.12,6,6; perhaps R.V.IV.26,6 etc.; Harita-A.V.V.28,5; V.28,9; IX.11,3; Cath.Sam.X.4; Jatarupa-Ait.Br.VIII.13;
468. Rajata-R.V.VIII.25,22; Taitt.Sam.I.5,1,2; Cath.Sam.X.4; Sat.Br.XII.4,4,7; XIII.4,2,10; XIV.1,3,4 etc.; A.V.V.28,1.
469. Ratna-R.V.I.20,7; 35,8; 41,6; 125,1; 140,11; 141,10; II.38,1 etc.; A.V.V.1,7; VII.14,4; Sat.Br.V.3,1,1.
470. R.V.I.35,4; I.26,4; VII.18,23.
471. A.V.IV.10,1.
472. Ait.Br.I.14.
473. Sadavinsa Br.V.6; Vedic Index II.304.
474. Sadavinsa Br.V.6.
475. Opasa-R.V.X.85,8; VIII.14,5; IX.71,1; A.V.VI.138,1.2; IX.3,8.
476. R.V.X.114,3.
477. R.V.VII.33,1.
477a. Vaj.Sam.XVI.43; Cath.Sam.XVII.15.

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Salali,[478] the quill of the porcupine was used for parting the hair. The Prakash,[479] a metal mirror is mentioned in the Brahmanas. A-darsa[480] may also denote a mirror. The beard and moustaches (smasru) are mentioned.[481] The wearing of the beard was a sign of manhood.[482] Shaving is also referred to.[483] It was done by means of a razor (ksura).[484] Cutting or shaving (vap) the hair is often referred to.[485] For a man to wear long hair was considered effeminate.[486] Upanah[487] denoting 'sandal' or 'shoe' was made of boar-skin.[488] The Kausitaki Brahmana mentions the combination of 'staff and sandals' (dandopanahau).[489]

Toilet and make up of the Ancient Aryans of the Vedic age deserves mention. We have references to Anjana, a salve used to anoint the eyes.[490] Sthagara,[491] a fragrant application might have been a salve for anointing the body. Further, curna appears to denote an aromatic powder in the phrase curna-hasta, used of the Apasaras in Kausitaki Upanisad.[492]

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478. Kath. Sam. XXIII. 1.
479. Taitt. Br. I. 8, 2, 3; Panca. Br. XVIII. 9, 10; Sat. Br. V. 4, 5, 22.
480. Brih. II. 1, 9; III, 9, 15; Chand. VIII. 7, 4; Kaus. Up. IV. 2, etc.
481. R.V. II. 11, 17; VIII. 33, 6; X. 23, 1; 26, 7; 142, 4; A.V.V. 19, 14; VI. 68, 2; Vaj. Sam. XIX. 92; XX. 5.
482. Taitt. Sam. V, 5, 1, 1.
483. R.V. X. 142, 4; A.V. VIII. 2, 17; Taitt. Br. I. 5, 16, 3.
484. A.V. VI. 68, 1. 3; Sat. Br. II. 6, 4, 5; III. 1, 2, 7; XII. 5, 20, 55; Taitt. Sam. II. 1, 5, 7; 5, 5, 6; V. 6, 6, 1; Sat. Br. III. 6, 2, 9; Mait. Sam. I. 10, 14; Kath. Sam. XXXVI. 8.
485. A.V. VIII. 2, 17; Sat. Br. V. 5, 3, 1.
486. Sat. Br. V. 1, 2, 14.
487. Sat. Sam. V. 4, 4, 4; 6, 6, 1, etc.
488. Sat. Br. V. 4, 3, 19.
489. Kaus. Br. III. 3.
490. A.V. IV. 9, 1; VI. 102, 3; IX. 6, 11; XIX. 44; Ait. Br. I. 3; Taitt. Sam. VI. 1, 1, 5; Cf. I. 2, 2, 1; Taitt. Mait. Sam. III. 6, 3; Sat. Br. III. 1, 3, 5; Vaj. Sam. IV. 3.
491. Taitt. Br. II. 3, 10, 2.
492. Kaus. Up. I. 4.

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Amusements And Pastime:

The Vedic people,like the people of any other age , would not be satisfied with the daily chores,prayers and sacrifices.They needed recreation and devised amusements of various kind.Play at the dice was a very popular game . In it there was a combination of recreation and gambling.[493] The dice appears normally to have been made of Vibhidaka nuts.[494] In the Vedic texts we have several terms connected with dicing.Yet it is difficult to asoertain the exact mode of in which it was played.The fascination exercised by gambling and the ruin caused by addiction to it,is frequently referred to.One complete hymn is actually devoted to this topic.[495] That gambling was looked upon as a contemptable vice is proved by many a passage.A father is represented as chastising his son for gambling.[496] The deceitful practice of gamblers are referred to at many places.[497] A dicer laments the loss of all his property,including his wife.[498] We have the picture of a gambler rendered destitute by the addiction, deserted by his relatives and restrained in his movement by his creditors.[499] Horse racing was also one of the favourite amusements of the Vedic Indians.The race course called Kastha[500]

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493. Vedic Index.I.2,5.
494. R.V.VII.86,6; X.34,1.
495. R.V.X.34.
496. R.V.II.29,5.
497. R.V.V.85,8.
498. R.V.X.43,2.
499. R.V.X.43.
500. R.V.VIII.80,8; A.V.II.14,6.

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or Aji[501] appears to have been quasi-circular[502] one to a mark (Karsman)[503] and back again. Chariot race was also quite popular. Terms such as Prt[504], Prtana[505] and Pra-dhana[506] may denote a contest in the chariot race. "How deeply racing (specially chariot racing) had entered into the popular scheme of entertainment is seen from its retual transformation into a ceremony which, by sympathetic magic, secures the success of the sacrificer. The essential part of the Vajapeya ceremony is a chariot race, in which the sacrificer is made victorious."[507] In the Vedic society, music, both vocal and instrumental appears to have been a popular mode of entertainment. Different vocal sounds are carefully analyzed during the musical chanting of Brahmanas engaged in extraction of the Soma juice.[508] The Samaveda provides us the evidence of the wonderful skill and originality of the Vedic Aryans in the science of vocal music. Professional musicians were known. A number of musical instruments are referred to in the Vedic texts such as Aghati[509] (cymbal), Adambara[510] (drum), Dundubhi[511] (drum), Lambana (drum)[512] Vanaspati[513] (wooden drum), Bhumidundubhi[514] (earth drum),

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501. R.V.IV.24,8; A.V.XIII.2,4; Vedic Index II.426.
502. A.V.II.14,6; XIII.2,4.
503. R.V.IX.36,1; 74,8.
504. R.V.II.27,15; 26,1; III.49,3; VI.20,1, etc.
505. R.V.I. 58,8; 91,21; 119,10; 152,7; II.40,5; III.24,1; VI.41, 5; X.29,8; Kaus.Br.XV.3; Taitt.Br.III.1,1,6; 2,6, etc.
506. R.V.I.116,2; 154,3; 169,2; X.102,5, etc.
507. The Vedic Age., 456.
508. R.V.VII.103,7-8.
509. R.V.X.146,2.
510. Vaj.Sam.XXX.19; Cf. Sat.Br.XIV.4,8,1.
511. R.V.I.28,5; VI.47,29.31; A.V.20,1 et seq.; Taitt.Br.I.3,6, 2; Sat.Br.V.1,5,6; Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5; Ait.Ar.V.1,5.
512. Brih.V.10,1.
513. Vaj.Sam., IX.12, Cf. A.V.XII.3, 15.
514. Taitt.Sam.VII.5,9,3; Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5; Panc.Br. V.5,19; Ait.Ar.V.1,5.

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Karkari[515](lute), Kandavina[516](lute),Tunava[517](flute), Nadi[518](reed flute),Venu (flutes of reed) Vana[519](Harp or lyre),Vani (lyre),[520]Vina[521](lute),Bakura[522](a sort of blowing instrument)and Sanka.[523]Many other instrument,of which we can not form an exact idea arealso named.They are Godha,[524]Pinga,[525]Vanici,[526]Gargara,[527]and Bekura[528]etc. The dancing of maidens is mentioned.[529]The Goddes of Dawn, Usas,is compared to a female dancer(Nrtu).[530]She is stated to manifest her beauty like a female dancer.It is stated that Usas is laying bare her breasts even as the cow manifests its udders at the time of milching.It may also

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515. R.V.II.43,3;A.V.IV.37,4,Cf.XX.132,3.8;Mait.Sam.IV.2,9.
516. Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5.
517. Taitt.Sam.VI.1,4,1;Mait.Sam.III.6,8;Kath.Sam.XXIII.4; XXXIV.5.
518. R.V.X.135,7;Kath.Sam.XXIII.4;XXXIV.5.
519. Taitt.Sam.VII.5,9,2;Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5;Panca.Br.V.6,12; XIV.7,8;Ait.Ar.V.1,4,etc.
520. R.V.X.32,4.
521. Taitt.Sam.VI.1,4,1;Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5,Mait.Sam.III.6,8; Sat.Br.III.2,4,6;XIII.1,5,1.
522. Brih.II.4,9;IV.5,10.
523. R.V.IX.1,8.
524. R.V.VIII.69,9.
525. R.V.VIII.69,9,
526. R.V.V.75,4.
527. R.V.VIII.69,9.
528. Panca.Br.I.3,1;VI.7,6;Jaiminiya Br.I.82.
529. R.V.I.92,4;X.18,3;I.10,1.
530. R.V.I.92,4.

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be remarked that this hymn of the Rigveda bears a distinct stamp of rural element.The comparison of the breast of Usas with the udders of a cow has typical rural air.In a rural and pastoral society in which the cow played an important role,the comparison with the cow is quite natural and shows the rural bias of the entire Vedix culture. Nrtta-gita, 'dance and song' are mentioned in the jaiminiya Brahmana.[531] Probably men also danced,as is implied in a simile in the Rigveda.[532] The origin of the drama may be traced back to the early Vedic times.The dialogue-hymns,[533] though in most cases clearly of secular origin,must have been utilized in some sort of ritual drama.A,B.Keith thinks that dramatic spectacles,religious in character were known in the early Vedic age.[534] The Sailusa in the Yajuraveda may refer to an actor.[535] The conversation between Sarama and Panis[536] not only contains elements of drama,it also appears to represent a dispute common in rural life over the possession of cattle and mediation by certain persons.This story appears to have been designed to create a dramatic atmosphere out of the simple rural-feuds over the possession of cattle.R reference

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531. Jaiminiya Brahmana I.41.

532. R.V.X.76,6.

533. R.V.X.95.

534. A.V.Keith,Sanskrit Drama,16.

535. Vaj.Sam.XXX.6,Taitt.Br.III.4,2,1;Vedic Index I.77,78;II. 395;Keith ,Journal of the Royal Asiatic,Society,1911, 995 et seq.

536. R.V.X.10,8.

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to a Nata (actor) changing his dress and painting himself indicates the popularity of dramatic performances in this age.[537] The Yajuraveda Samhita refers to an acrobate or 'pole dancer' called 'vamsa-nartin'.[538] From certain evidences it seems that riddles were also a means of entertainment among the rural folk.[539] In the Rigveda there are references to festive gatherings (Samana).[540] According to Pischel[541] it was a general popular festivity to which women went to enjoy themselves,[542] poets to win fame,[543] bowmen to gain prises at archery,[544] horses to run races,[545] and which lasted untill morning,[546] or untill a conflagration, caused by the fires kept burning all night scattered the celeberators.[547] Young women,[548] elderly women,[549] sought there to find a husband, and courtezans to make profit of the

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537. The Vedic Age, 519.
538. Vaj.Sam.XXX.21.
539. R.V.I.164; VIII.29; X.1,77; A.V.XX.127,36.
540. R.V.II.16,7; VI.60,2; VII.2,5; VIII.12,9; IX.97,47; X.55,5; 86,10; A.V.II.36,1.
541. Vedische Studien, 2, 314.
542. R.V.I.124,8 (Cf.Vra); IV.58,8; VI.75,4; VII.2,5; X.86,10; 168,2.
543. R.V.II.16,7; IX.97,47.
544. R.V.VI.75,3.5.
545. R.V.IX.96,9; A.V.VI.92,2.
546. R.V.I.48,6.
547. R.V.X.69,11; Cf.VII.9,4.
548. A.V.II.36,1.
549. R.V.VII.2,5.

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occasion.[550] Hunting seems to have been practised not only as a profession but as a sport as well.[551] Hunting must have been done both for recreation and for purposes of food.[552] Birds were caught in nets.[553] Pits were used for catching antelops (Rsya).[554] Elephants used to be caught by tamed female elephants.[555] The loin was captured in pit-falls.[556] The use of dogs to hunt the boar (Varah) is also referred[557] to. Accoring to the writers of the Vedic Index[558] Yatudhan[559] may denote a magician. However it is very difficult to ascertain whether magical performances were at all meant for recreation. We have also references to swing (Prenkha[560] or Plenkha)[561] in the later Vedic texts. Swinging must have been a mode of recreation as it is widely popular among the ladies in the rural parts of our country even in our own times. As far as can be judged from the notices available[562] the swing was made just like a modern swing.

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550. R.V.IV.58,8.
551. A.V.VIII.8,5;X.1,26;X.1,30.
552. Vedic Index II.172,173.
553. R.V.III.45,1;IX.83,4;X.73,11;A.V.X.1,30.Cf.R.V.VIII.8,5.
554. R.V.X.39,8.
555. R.V.VIII.2,6;X.40,5;Pischel,Vedische Studien,2,121-123;317-319.
556. R.V.X.28,10;Cf.R.V.I.174,3;V.74,4;V.15,5.
557. R.V.X.86,4.
558. Vedic Index II.190.
559. R.V.I.35,10;X.87,2.3.7.10;120,4;A.V.I.7,1;IV.3,4;VI.13,3;32,2;VII.20,2;XIX.46,2;Kath.Sam.XXXVII.14;Vaj.Sam.XIII.7;Sat.Br.VII.4,1,29.
560. Kath.Sam.XXXIV.5;Ait.Ar.I.2,3,4;V.1,3;Panca.Br.V.5,7.
561. Taitt.Sam.VII.5,8,5;Taitt.Br.I.2,6,6.
562. Sankhayana Srauta Sutra,XVII.1,11;7,2,etc.

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Education:

The Vedas suggest that the vast mass of knowledge was the out come of discussions and delibrations not of the town but of villages, thus pointing to the rural importance of our culture. The VedicAryans had a keen interest in the different branches of knowledge and realized the value of intellectual powers in human progress.[563] "One Vedic hymn, for example says that all normal people being outwardly equal with the same number of hands and feet, eyes and ears, it was the intellectual brilliance which constituted the supremacy of one over another. The importance of education was emphasized by the belief that the gods befriended only those who were wise and learned."[564] The word 'brahmacharin' in the technical sense of a 'religious student' is found in the Rigveda.[565] The home of the teacher was the school where he taught his sons alongwith the neighbouring students.[566] That the instruction was imparted orally is indicated by the Frog-hymn.[567] It refers to the repetition by the pupil the words taught by his teacher.[568] The art of writing was very probably known, but is played no

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563. R.V.X.81,7.
564. A.S.Altekar, Studies in the Cultural History of India, 89.
565. R.V.X.109,5.
566. Chand.VIII.15,1; IV.9,1; 11.23,6; Brih.III.7,1.
567. R.V.VII.103.
568. R.V.VII.103,4.

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part in the educational system is accepted by all.[569] That the education in this Rural Home University was not merely religious and literary, but also included secular subjects important for the rural folk such as Bhutavidya (demonology),[570] Naksatravidya (astronomy),[571] Nadhi (chronology)[572] or minerology[573], Sarpavidya[574] (science of snakes), Daiva[575] (utpatajnana, apparently the 'knowledge of portents'), Rasi[576] (mathematics), Devajana-vidya[577] (dancing and music or mythology), Vakovakya (science of logic), Akayana (science of ethics), Kshatra-Vidya (military science) and Silpadi-vijnana (fine arts and crafts)[578] etc. Thus the educational system of the Vedic period produced a people not only well grounded in their religious and literary lore but also in their family profession. The theory of the later age that women were ineligible for education was altogether unknown in this period. The authors of some of the Vedic hymns were women; Visavara, Sikta, Nivavari, Ghosha, Lopamudra and Apala. Girls were also trained

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569. V.M.Apte, Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, Poona, IV.
570. Chand.VII.1,2,4;2,1;7,1.
571. Chand.VII.1,2,4;2,1;7,1; The Vedic Age, 514.
572. Ibid.; St.Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.
573. R.K.Mookarji, Hindu Civilization, 113.
574. Chand.VII.1,2,4;2,1;7,1.
575. Ibid.; Vedic Index I.380.
576. Ibid.77
577. Ibid.
578. Ibid.

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in arts and crafts.The Vedic Language has a number of words for women weavers,bow-makers,arrow-makers etc.According to Tattiriya Aranyaka if study is carried on in the village, it is to be done silently.(manasa);if out side, aloud (vaca).[579] It is not the object of this thesis to describe the educational system of this period as a whole, for that is too big a subject and requires separate treatment by itself.Here it would be sufficient to remark that the learning or culture of the Vedic Aryans was chiefly the product of the forests.It was not of the cities.The learning of the forests was embodied in the books specially designed as Aranyakas,"belonging to the forests."Indian civilization in its early stages had been mainly a rural, sylvan and not an urban civilization.

Knowledge Of Medicine And Sanitation:

The practice of medicine was regarded as a respectable profession.[580] The Bhisaj denoting 'physician'is a word of common occurance in the Vedic texts.[581] A hymn of the Atharvaveda[582] contains deprecation of the use of home made remedied instead of reliance on his professional training. The Asvins[553] are described as the great healers of diseases

579. Taitt.Ar.II.11.12-15.

580. R.V.IX.112,1;X.97,4.8;Vaj.Sam.XXX.10;Taitt.Br.III.4,4,1.

581. R.V.II.33,4;VI.50,7;IX.112,1,etc.;A.V.V.29.1;VI.24,2; Taitt.Sam.VI.4,9,2;Vaj.Sam.XVI.5;XIX.12.88;XXX.10,etc.

582. A.V.V.30,5.

583. R.V.I.116,16;157,6;VIII.18,8;84,1;X.39,3.5;A.V.VII.53, 1; Ait.Br.I.18.

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and experts in the surgical art.Varuna[584] and Rudra[585] are also called physicians.However,during the later Vedic age a dislike seems to have developed for this profession.In some Samhita and Brahmana texts of the Yajurveda,[596] the asvins are condemned because of their having to do with the practice of medicine (bhesaj),on the ground that it brings them toomuch among men,an allusion to the caste dislike of promiscuous contact.[587] For disease the general term Roga occurs in the Atharvaveda and later texts.[588] Among the diseases Yakshma is frequently mentioned to denote illness in general and "consumption "in particular.[589] The Vedic texts enumerate a large number of diseases such as Aksata[590] (sores), Apacit[591] (scrofulous swellings), Apva[592] (diarrahoea),[593] Arsas[594] (Haemorrhoids), Alaji[595] (eyei disease),

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584. R.V.I.24,9.

585. R.V.II.33,4.7.

586. Taitt.Sam.VI.4,9,3;Cf.Mait.Sam.IV.6,2;Sat.Br.IV1,5,14.

587. Vedic Index II.105.

588. A.V.I.2,4;II.3,3;III.28,5;VI.44,1;120,3;Chand.;VII.26,2.

589. R.V.I.122,9;X.85,31;97,11.12;137,4;163,1.6;A.V.II.10,5.6;III.31,1;V.4,9;30,6;VIII.7,2;IX.8,3.7.10;XII.2,1.2;4,8;XIX.36,1;38,1.Cf.Vaj.Sam.XII.97;Kath.Sam.XVII.11;Taitt.Sam.II.3,5,2;5,6,5;Kath.Sam.XI.3;Mait.Sam.II.2,7;Sat.Br.IV.1,3,9.

590. A.V.VII.73,4.

591. A.V.VI.25,1;83,1;VII.75,1;77,1.

592. A.V.IX.8,9.

593. Weber,Indische Studien,9,482;17,184.

594. Vaj.Sam.XII.98.

595. A.V.IX.8,20.

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Asarika[596](pain in limbs),[597]Asrava[598](mutratisara-painful urination),[599]Upacit[600](swelling),Kilasa[601](white leprosy), Kismila,[602]Ksata[603](a sort of phthisis pulmonalis),Ksetriya[604] (a hereditary disease[605]or/scrofula or syphilis),[606] Glaunta[607] (swelling),Grahi[608](fit supposed to be caused by a demoness), Graha[609](paralysis of the thigh),[610]Graivya[611](tumours on the neck),[612]Glau[613](boil),[614]Jambha[615](convulsions) Ajaka[616] (A disease stated to be caused by a pioson)Harimana[617](jaundice)

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596. A.V.XIX.34,10.
597. Zimmer,AL.,65,391.
598. A.V.I.2,4;II.3,2;VI.44,2.
599. Sayana on A.V.I.2,4. It may denote diabetes?
600. Vaj.Sam.XII.97.
601. A.V.I.23,24;Vaj.Sam.XXX.21;Panch.Br.XIV.3,17;XXIII.11, 11;Taitt.Ar.V.4,12.
602. A.V.XIX.8,4.
603. A.V.VII.76,4.
604. A.V.II.8,10;III.7.Cf.II.14,5;IV.18,7.
605. Vedic Index. I.211.
606. Zimmer AL.391,392.
607. A.V.VI.83,3;Ait.Br.I.25.
608. R.V.X.161,1;A.V.II.9,1;10,6.8;VI.112,1;113,1;VIII.2,12; 3,18;XVI.7,1;8,1;XIX.45,5.
609. A.V.XI.9,12.
610. Vedic Index.I.248.
611. A.V.VI.25,2;VII.76,2.
612. Vedic Index.I.248.
613. A.V.VI.83,3;Ait.Br.I.25.
614. Bloomfielf,hymns of the Atharvaveda,17,503.
615. A.V.II.4,2;Cf.A.V.VIII.1,16.
616. R.V.VII.50,1.
617. R.V.I.50,11.12.Sayana describes it as causing the body to be haridvarna.In this context,harit perhaps means pale,yellow.Does it meanjaudice?Sunshine is stated to cure the disease.)

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Hrdroga[618](heart disease),Ajnatarus [619](wounds and sores of unknown origin),Jayanya[620](jaundice or disease of lungs), Takman[621](a kind of fever),Trtiyaka (the tertian fever), Dus-carman[622](Skin disease or leprosy), Dusika[623](rheum of the eyes),Pakaru[624](ulcers),[625]Paman[626](scab),Prstyamaya[627] (pain in the sides),Pramota [628](dumbness),Balasa [629] (consumption),Nirala,[630]Vilohita[631](anaemia),[632]Visara[633]

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618. R.V.I.50,11;Cf.Hrdyota,A.V.I.22,1;VI.24,1.
619. A.V.VI.48,3.
620. A.V.VII.76,3-5;XIX.44,2.Cf.Jayenva,A.V.II.3,5.2.
621. A.V.I.25,4;V.22,13;VI.20;VII.116;XIX.39,10;(Cf.V.4); IV.9,8;V.4,1.9;30,16;IX.8,6;XI.2,22.26,etc.;The Vedic Age,459;Vedic Index I.294-296.
622. Taitt.Sam.II.1,4,3;5,1,7;Taitt.Br.I.7,8,3.
623. A.V.XVI.6,8;Kath.Sam.XXXIV.12;Vaj.Sam.XXV.9;Sat.Br.III. 1,3,10.
624. Vaj.Sam.XII.97.
625. Vedic Index I.514.
626. A.V.V.22,12;Taitt.Sam.VI.1,3,8;Kath.Sam.XXIII.4;Sat.Br. III.2,1,31;Vedic Index I.517.
627. A.V.XIX.34,10;Vedic IndexII.21.
628. A.V.IX.8,4.
629. A.V.IV.9,8;V.22,11;VI.14,1;127,1;IX.8,8;XIX.34,10,Vaj. Sam.XII.97;Vedic Index.II.61.
630. Sayana on A.V.VI.16,3.He regards it as the name of a disease.
631. A.V.IX.8,1;XII.4,4.
632. Whitney,Translation of the Atharvaveda,549.
633. A.V.II.4,2.

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(tearing pains),Visucika (dysentery),[634] Viskandha[635] (rheumatism),Visthavrajin[636](one afflicted by dysentery) Visalya[637] and Visalyaka[638](neuralgia),[639]Visras[640](senility), Sirsakti[641](headache),Sirsamaya[642](some disease of the Head), Slonya[643](lameness),Svitra[644](afflicted with leprosy), Skandhya[645](a disease of the shoulders,probably turmours of some kind),[646] Simada[647](a disease of some kind),Sipada[648] (some unknown disease)Hrdayamaya[649](A disease of the heart), Hrudu[650](contraction of muscles),Surama[651](Sura sickness),

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634. Vaj.Sam.XIX.10;Mait.Sam.III,11,7;Kath.Sam.XXXVII.18; Taitt.Br.II.6,1,5;Sat.Br.XII.7,3,2.

635. A.V.I.16,3;II.4,1 et seq.;III.9,2.6;IV.9,5;XIX.34,5; Taitt.Sam.VII.3,11,1.

636. Sat.Br.V.1,12;S.B.E.,50,n.1.

637. A.V.IX.8,20.

638. A.V.VI.127,1;IX.8,2.5;XIX.44,22.

639. Vedic Index II.315.

640. A.V.XIX.34,3;Vedic Index II.315.

641. A.V.I.12,3;IX.8,1;XII.2,19;5,23;V.4,10.

642. A.V.V.4,10;IX.8,1.

643. Taitt.Br.III,9,17,2;Cf.Slona,'lame',A.V.XII.4,3;Taitt. Sam.VI.1,6,7,etc.

644. Panca.Br.XII.11,11.

645. A.V.VI.25,3.

646. Vedic Index.II.483.

647. R.V.VII.50,4.

648.R.V.VII.50,4;Vedic Index.II.379.

649. A.V.V.30,9.

650.A.V.I.25,2.3.

561. R.V.X.131,5.

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Kas,[652] Kasa,[653] Kasa,[654] Kasika[655] (cough), Manya[656] (a disease of the neck) Vandana[657] (some sort of eruption spreding over the body), Apasmara[658] (mania, epilepsy), Atisara[659] (diarrhoea), Jalodra[660] (dropsy), Ksetriga[661] (a congenital disease identified with a kind of consumption) etc. The Vedic texts also mention innumerable bodily defects such as Vamana or kubja, khalati (a bald person), Andha, (blind), Badhira (a deaf man)[662] etc. There are references to surgical skill in the Vedic texts. The example of Vispala to whom the Asvins gave an iron leg (jangha ayasi) may suggest imputation of limbs.[663] The practice of dissecting animals at the sacrifice was a great help to their knowledge of anatomy. For example Caksus (eye) is divided into white (sukla) dark (krsna) and the pupil

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652. A.V.I.12,3; V.22,10.
653. A.V.V.22,11.
654. A.V.VI.105,1 et seq.
655. A.V.V.22,12; XII2,22.
656. A.V.VI.25,1.
657. R.V.VII.50,2; Cf.21,5; A.V.VII.115,2; VII.113,1.
658. A.V.IV.20,37.
659. A.V.I.2,4.
660. A.V.I.10; VI.24,127 etc.
661. A.V.II.8,10; IV.18,7; V.30,4.
662. For further details and references see Vedic Index II. 338 under Vyadhi.
663. R.V.I.112,10; 116,15 etc.

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(Kaninaka),[664] A hymn of the Atharvaveda enumerates many parts of the body with some approach to accuracy and orderly arrangement.[665] However it would not be wrong to assume that both surgery and medicine branches of medical knowledge must have been in an elementary stage. The entire hymn X.97 of the Rigveda is addressed to Oshadhis (the plants) with special reference to their curative power. Herbs and plants are referred to in the Vedic texts for their curative power and it occupied a very important place in the materia medica of this period. The Atharvaveda describes in detail the symptoms of various diseases. The chief curative and preventive consisted of charms, water, amulets and healing herbs, the power of the last two having been brought about by sacred formulae. Quite a number of medicinal charms are included in the Atharvaveda. It contains charms against snake-bite.[666] In the rural folk of the Vedic age fear of snake bite appears to have been wide spread. Magical rites and formula were designed both for preventing snake bite and for curing people of its dangerous effects.[667] An antidote (tastuva or tasruva)[668] of snake poison is also referred to. Jalbhesa-bhesaj[669] may referred to water therapy.

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664. Sat.Br.XII.8,2,26; Jaiminiya Br.I.284,324; Jaiminiya Up.Br.I.26,1; 34,1; Brih.II.2,2; Ait.Ar.II.1,5, etc.

665. A.V.X.2, for detailed references see Vedic Index II 358 Sarira.

666. A.V.V.13.

667. A.V.VI.56.

668. A.V.V.13,10.11.

669. R.V.I.43,4; VIII.29,5; A.V.II.27,6; Vedic Index I.105.

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Amulets made of oild seed plant soaked in mustard oil was believed to be a sure cure of eye diseases.[670] Arundhati is the name of a plant celebrated in several passage of the Atharvaveda as possessing healing properties in case of wounds.[671] A plant called Prsni-parni,[672] perhaps later called Laksmana was regarded as curing barrenness.[673] Pippali,[674] denoting berries, is described as a remedy for wound. A plant called Nitani[675] was used as a means for restoring the hair. We have also reference to Jangida,[676] a healing plant, used as an amulate against the diseases such as Takman, Balasa, Asarika, Visarika, Prstyamaya fevers etc. Kustha plant is described as a cure for headache, diseases of the eyes, bodily affliction, specially fever (Takman). The wearing of an amulet, made of munja (grass) and the drinking of muddy water are prescribed as remedies against certain diseases. Many drugs were supposed to be effective only when consecrated by mantras. The magic mantras could make the obstructed urine flow.[677] Sankhayana Brahmana[678] has a very correct observation that "sickness is particularly

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670. A.V.VI.16,3.
671. A.V.IV.12,1;V.5,5.9;VI.59,1.2;VIII.7,6;XIX.38,1.
672. A.V.II.25,1 et seq.
673. Roth cited by Whitney in Translation of the Atharvaveda.
674. A.V.VI.136.
675. A.V.XIX.34,10.
676. A.V.II.4;XIX.34.35.
677. A.V.I.3,1.
678. Sankhayana Brahmana V.1.

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prevalent at the junction of the seasons."A curious cause of diseases was,according to the Vedic people,the entry of demons into the body.Theybelieved that certain diseases might be cured by priests with the help of the mantras.[679] Mantras and magical rites appear to have been resorted to even for ensuring the safe delivery of children.From the number of rites prescribed during the period of pregnancy,it seems that a safe delivery was a matter of great concerned Thus the practice of curing diseases by propitiating the demons by means of rites and ceremonies which still persist among the rural folk of our country goes back to the Vedic times.Certain passages testify to the people's faith that divine grace could effect rejuvenation.Old age is said to have been rejuvenated from the body of the sage Cyavana.[680]

Popular Beliefs,Superstitions And Practices :

No account of the social life of the rural folk of the Vedic age could be considered as complete without a review of their popular beliefs,superstitions and practices etc. Vedic people appear to have dreaded bad dreams.[681] Bad dreams were supposed to forebode a coming danger or even death.These are supposed to be the offspring of such female deities as Grahi,[682] Nirti[683] etc. Water consecrated

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679. A.V.VII.76,1-2;VI.83,1-4;V.3,9;VI.26;VII.28;IX.8 etc.
680. R.V.116,10.
681. R.V.VIII.47,15;A.V.XVI.2,1-8;XVI.7,8 etc.
682. A.V.II.9,1;10,6.8;VI.112,1;113,1;VIII.2,12;3.18;XVI.7, 1;8,1;XIX.45,5.
683. R.V.I.38,6;X.114,2;A.V.V.7,9.

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with certain mantras were supposed to destroy bad dreams. The recitation of a hymn from the Atharvaveda[684] was supposed to divert bad dreams to undesirable persons. We have a list of charms against bad dreams.[685] They also believed in ghosts, spirits, demigods, goblins, imps, demons and gandharvas etc. These malevolent forces were believed to be subjugated by Indra, the sun god, fire god and some otherdeities. We have already referred to prayers to gods for killing the demons and releasing the waters. Male and female demons of various kind were supposed to be roving about with the object of causing harm to people. A demon was believed to devour the embryo in the womb.[686] Another named Atrin caused harm to cows, horses and heroes.[687] Viskhandhas,[688] Karsapha, Visapha,[689] Arayi,[690] Arayas,[691] etc. are the names of certain demons and goblins among whom there are both males and females. Alinda, polala, Anupalala, Sarku, Koka, Malimuca, Vavrivasa, Rksagriva[692] etc. were perhaps the name of Arayas. Arayas were supposed to attack in dreams after assuming the forms of brother of father.[693] The number of demons is quite large

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684. A.V.XVI.5.
685. A.V.IV.18,7;VI.45,1;46,1;VII.100,1;IX.22,3;X.3,6 etc.
686. A.V.II.25.
687. A.V.I.16,1.
688. A.V.III.9.
689. A.V.III.9,1.
690. A.V.II.14.
691. A.V.VIII.6,7.
692. A.V.VIII.6,1.2.
693. A.V.VIII.6,7.

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in accordance with the numerous troubles in rural life.. They are believed to dance around the house like asses.[694] Having foul smell and red faces,[695] horns on heads and hands, the front of feet turned backward and heels turned in front they pierce women in their hips and eat raw flesh and devour the foetus. Muradevas were believed to be neckless.[696] Evil forces like Kimidins[697] were supposed to cause illness and destroy the milk of the cows. A disease-demon dalled Kanva[698] (perhaps the soul of the dead man assumed as a demon) is mentioned. Takman, a fever malady, was supposed to be caused by the ceizer of a spirit.[699] There is a great controversy as to whether or not the Rigveda contains magic. But if we regard mysterious and miraculous things which can not be explained as magic, then the hymns testifying miracles and mysteries through divine favour may be supposed to be of magical significance.[700] Many kinds of sorcery (Yatu) such as Uluka, Sva, Koka, Suparna, Susuluka, Grdhra etc. are mentioned.[701] People also seem to have believed in the existance of spirits of the forests, trees and plants.[702]

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694. A.V.VIII.6,10.
695. A.V.VIII.6,12.
696. A.V.VIII.4,24; Cf.R.V.III.30,17.
697. A.V.XI.8,19.
698. A.V.II.25.
699. R.V.VII.10.
700. R.V.I.187,191; II.42,43; III.53; IV.57; V.78,47; VII.50,550 103; X.58,60.84 etc. X.159,4; X.87,13; V.78,7; X.122 etc.
701. A.V.VIII.4,21.22. Cf.A.V.V.31,12; X.1,31; II.12 etc.
702. A.V.VI.136,1; CF.Bloomfield, Atharvaveda, 67.

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They believed in Raksas not only in human form[703] but also in the guise of various kinds of birds, and animals like dogs, owl, hawks[704] etc. There are references to Pisacas,[705] Gandharvas,[706] and Apasaras[707] also. The Atharvaveda[708] has a long list of magical rites for curing diseases. Magical rites and practices were also supposed to ensure prosperity and long life,[709] growth of hair,[710] promotion of virility of a man,[711] removal of evil signs;[712] removal of jealousy of a man,[713] pacifying of the anger of the husband.[714] There are practices directed against a co-wife or rival.[715] They also believed in the efficacy of certain practices for acquisition of husband.[716] We have references to love charms designed either to win the love of a person of opposite sex or to regain lost love.[717] The practice of Vasikarana to bring a

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703. A.V.VIII.6;V.29,6-8;VIII.6,3;VII.76,4;VI.11,1-3;VIII.6, 10.11.14;VII.30,2.
704. A.V.VIII.6.
705. A.V.V.29,9;IV.36,8;20,9;37,10, etc.
706. A.C.II.2,3; IV.37,1-2;IV.37,11;VIII.6,19.
707. A.V.IV.37,7.
708. A.V.I.15;V.22;VIII.116; 1.2;II.3;1.3;II.8,1-2;II.8,3; II.8,4;II.8,5;III.7;III.11;VII.76;VI.25,55;VI.83;VII. 74;I.10;VI.24;VI.127;VI.80;I.22;I.23;24;VI.90;VI.14. VI.105 and 107; I.12;VI.16 etc.
709. A.V.IV.9;IV.10;III.5,
710. A.V.VI.21;VI.136.
711. A.V.IV.4.
712. A.V.I.18.
713. A.V.VI.18;VII.45;VII.74,3 etc.
714. A.V.VI.43.
715. A.V.III.18;I.14.
716. A.V.II.3[illegible];II.36,7;III.36,5;VI.60 etc.
717. A.V.II.30;VI.8,9,102; VI.130,131.132.

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woman under control is also found.[718] We have also references to magical rites for victory in war,[719] safety in agricultural operations,[720] protection of crops[721] and cattle.[722] These and many other popular beliefs, superstitions and practices would clearly shows that the rural folk of the Vedic age were the same simple, unsophisticated people, as we find evên today in our rural areas. Many beliefs and practices are common evin in the present age among the villagers in our country and it may point to the long survival and continuity of our ancient rural culture.

Moral And Ethical Ideas:

The Aryans in the Vedic age seem to have reached moral and ethical heights which evên we, the moderns, with all our boasted civilization, have not been able to surpass. To quote max-Muller, "the whole of the literature from one end to the other is pervaded by expressions of love and reverence for Truth." But after all the society is human. While on the one hand, we find highly intellectual people indulging in philosophical thought, on the other hand we have the evidence of the common village folk not free from the foibles and frailities common to human beings.

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718. A.V.III.25.
719. A.V.III.6; VII.8; VI.1, 34; I.27.
720. For details about such rites and mantras, B.R.Modak, agricultural Hymns in the Atharvaveda and their Usage, Summeries of paperz, A.I.O.C., XIX.1957; A.V.VI.142.
721. A.V.VI.50.
722. A.V.IV.3; II.32; IV.38, 5-7; VI.77 etc.

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The Aryans paid great importanbe to hosipitality. "The frequent epithet of Agni,viz.,Atithi, the beloved guest in human abodes,takes for granted the affection and respect generally shown to a guest."[723] In the Atharvaveda a complete hymn is devoted to the prayse of hospitality.[724] Uprightness is commended while crookedness is condemned . Miserliness was looked with contempt.Unequivocal hatred has been expressed towards merchants and userers.Gambling with dice,in which deceit is practised,has been condemned.[725] Falsehood was looked upon as a vice,and people resorting to falsehood were supposed to be punished by God.Intomication caused by Sura (wine)was regarded as indecent.[726] It was regarded as a good practice to act upto the advice of experienced people.

The moral ideas of the people could also be seen from their conception of sin.[727] They were always keen to refrain from sin.The Aryans thought that the man owed some duty to his felow beings also.[728] Offence against a neighbour , friend or comrade,or even a stranger was considered as a sin.[729] (agas).Adultery , witchcraft,gambling,drinking, senselessness and self deception was considered as deviation

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723. The Vedic Age,384.
724. A.V.IX.6.
725. R.V.V.85,8.
726. A.V.VI.70,1.
727. R.V.VII.86,6;VII.88,5.6.
728. R.V.X.117.
729. R.V.X.85,7.

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from the moral life.The theory that confession implying repentance somewhat mitigates the guilt is seen in the Satpatha Brahmana.

However we should not entertain highly exaggerated notion of high moral ideals of the Aryans.Evidences of prostitution,[730] illegitimate child birth,[731] conjugal infidelity,[732] incestuous relations,[733] clandestine love affair,[734] illicit connections,[735] abortion to get rid of illegitimate child-birth,[736] robbery,[737] theft,[738] cheating,[739] paramours[740] and the like would also reflect the seamy side of life.

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730. R.V.I.167,4;I.124,7;IV.5,5;A.V.I.17,11;XV2,1;XIV.1, 36;V.7,10;Taitt.Br.III.4,11,1;Vaj.Sam.XXX.15.

731. R.V.II.29,1;A.V.V.5,8;Vaj.Sam.XXX.6;Taitt.Br.III.4, 2,1.

732. R.V.IV.5,5;V.104,17.24;

733. R.V.X.162,5;V.55,4;X.10;Ait.Br.III.33;Sat.Br.I.7,4,1.

734. R.V.X.40,2;X.40,6;IV.5,5.

735. R.V.I.134,3;V.9,1;A.V.XV.9,1-2.

736. R.V.II.29,1.

737. R.V.I.51,6;I.59,6;I.100,12;101 5;103.4;117.3;II.11,18; 12,10;20,8;29,9;31,5;34,6;IV.16,10.12;19.7;28,3;38,1; V.4,6;V,10;14,4;29,10;70,3;VI.4,8;22,10;23,2;33,3;45, 24;47,20 etc.

738. R.V.I.42,3;65,1;120,7;129,6;134,5;150,2;151,5;180,3; 191,5;II.23,16;28,10;43,4;IV.38,8;V.3,11;15,5;52,12; VI.27,3;53,4;VII.55,3;86,5;104,10;VIII.29,6.7;66,8 etc. A.V.IV.3,2;XIX.47,7;50,5;Vaj.Sam.XI.77.78.

739. R.V.II.23,5.

740. R.V.X.3,3;I.134,3 etc.

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Aryans were also common men like ourselves.Therefore evidences about their eternal attraction towards the opposite sex is quite natural.The dialogue hymn of the Rigveda, describing the conversation of Yamaand Yami shows how a young woman cannot resist the temptation of union even with her own brother.[741] The Aksa hymn of the Rigveda tells us that the gambler is attracted by the dice just as a concubine invites her paramour to the place of assignation.[742] We find a widow lovingly caressing her brother-in-law while going to bed.[743] Again,there are references to brotherless women going astray,[744] and an adulterous wife despising her husband.There are evidences of illigitimate conception and consequent abortion.[745] A passage in the Rigveda refers to a widow seeking union with a male or entering a house in quest of money.[746] When youngmen make love with charming young women,the latter also flirt among the former.[747] These and many such other references may be taken as throwing light on the folklore in rural life.Even most jarring references to incestuous relation between father and daughter can be adduced.[748] From a passage in the Rigveda[749] be learn that many women were attached to men merely out of greed for money.Weber [750] has

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741. R.V.X.10.
742. R.V.X.34.
743. R.V.X.40,2.
744. R.V.IV.5,5;1.24,7;Cf.A.V.I.17,1.
745. R.V.II.29,1.
746. R.V.I.24,7.
747. R.V.X.30,5.
748. R.V.X.61.5-7;Cf.Ait.Br.III.33;Sat.Br.I.7,4,1.
749. R.V.X.27,12.
750. Vedic Index II.396.

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adduced some material indicating an indifference to these matters in Vedic times and Ludwig has also adopted the same view. But Delbruck has clearly shown that the evidence is not convincing.[751] Conjugal morality generally stood on a high level. The ritual of Varunapraghasa[752], in which the wife of the sacrificer is questioned as regards her lovers, is evidently a rite to expiate unchastity (even platonic or purely mental) on the part of the wife. All these may be taken rather as exceptions that prove the rule of a high standard of ordinary sexual morality. "After all the society is human, and while we should not entertain highly exaggerated notions of unfailing chastity during the age, disproportionate importance need not be attached to isolated cases, or peculiar and exceptional customs and institutions."[753]

751. Vedic Index, II.396.
752. Mait.Sam., I.10,11; Sat.Br.II.5,2,20.
753. The Vedic Age, 453.

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CHAPTER - IV

THE ECONOMIC LIFE

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THE ECONOMIC LIFE

Agriculture:

In India, since ancient times, agriculture has remained the most important occupation of the villagers. It may be interesting to point out that the word Grāmya[1] denoting cultivated in reference to grains may indicate the close relation of the Grāma (village) with agriculture. It was important occupation of the Aryans in the Vedic age and it employed the largest part of the rural population. People depended for their very existence on agriculture. It was the central and pivotal national industry determining the very type of the general economic and social structure of the community. It was essentially an agricultural period and even the highest in the society had to till the land. That this was a vocation not to be undertaken by the elite did not enter their mind and all the people were bound by a bondage of common interest. As it has been already pointed out the very name Arya, by which the Aryan conquerors of India have distinguished themselves from the aborigines or Dasas, is said to have come from a root which means to cultivate. There are remarkable passages in the Rigveda to indicate that the new settlers in calling themselves Arya had not altogether forgotten the original significance of the word. One instance will suffice :'O ye Ashwin - You have displayed your glory by teaching the Arya to cultivate with

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1. Brih. Vi. 3, 13.

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the plough and to sow corn, and by giving him rains for the production of his food, and by destroying the Dasyu by your thunder-bolt."[1a] Thus the very names which the Aryan Conquerors of India gave themselves are names which are believed to indicate that useful occupation whhch distinguishes the civilized man from the barbarian, viz., cultivation of the soil."[2] We have already referred to words "carasni" and "Kristi" indicating the advancement of the early Vedic Aryans from the nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoral stage to settled agricultural pattern of rural life.[3] The importance of agriculture is evidenced from a hymn waere there is an advice, "Do not indulge in playing dice, rather cultivate."[4] In the following hymn of the Rigveda[5] we may trace the beginning of agriculture:

> The Deities approached, they carried axes; splitting the wood they came with their attendants.
> They laid good timber in the fire-receivers, and burnt the grass up where they found it growing.

Land And Divisions:

Lands were classified as waste land, forests and cultivated land. The waste land was perhaps called khila[6] or Khilya.[7] It denotes land lying between cultivated fields.

1a. R.V.I.117,21.
2. R.C.Dutt.History of Civilization in Ancient India,34-35.
3. Please see page of this thesis.
4. R.V.X.34,13;117,7.Cf.Hopkins,India,Old and New,208.
5. R.V.X.28,8.
6. A.V.VII.115,4;Sat.Br.VIII.3,4,1.
7. R.V.VI.28,2;X.142,3;Roth,St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v. Whitney,Translation of the Atharvaveda,loc.cit.

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According to Pischel[8] it means broad lands, which were used for the pasturing of the cattle of the community and were not broken up by the cultivated fields. But Oldenberg thinks that it denotes land which lay between the culivated fields, but which need not be deemed to have been unfertile.[9] This agrees with the fact that in the Vedic times separate fields were already known.[10] The use of the word Ksetra (field) in the Rigveda[11] points clearly to the existence of fields carefully measured off. In the Atharvaveda[12] and later the sense of a separate field is clearly marked. According to macdonell and Keith "the system of separate holdings already existed in the early Vedic times".[13] We have reference to fertile fields (apnasvati)[14] and waste fields (artana).[15]

The Aranya was uncultivated land-not necessarily forest land-beyond the village. It is contrasted with home (ama),[17] plough land (Krsi)[18] and settled village or Grama.[19] Aranya in many other references seems to denote, forest,[20] where the Aryans carried their dead for burial[21] and hermits also

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8. Vedische Studien, 2, 205 quoted in the Vedic Index. I. 216.
9. Oldenberg, Rgveda-Noten, I. 385, 386.
10. Vedic Index I. 216.
11. R.V. X. 33, 6. Cf. III. 31, 15; V. 62, 7.
12. A.V. IV. 18, 5; V. 31, 4; X. 1, 18; XI. 1, 22; Taitt. Sam. II. 2, 1, 2; Chand. VII. 24, 2, etc.
13. Vedic Index. I. 211.
14. R.V. I. 127, 6.
15. Ibid.
16. Vedic Index I. 33.
17. R.V. VI. 24, 10.
18. A.V. II. 4, 5.
19. Sat. Br. XIII. 6, 2, 20.
20. R.V. X. 146.
21. Brih. V. 11.

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lived there.[22] These forests must have provided grazing to herds and supply of material for house building and thatching, fuel and other forests products to the villagers .

In the Vedic texts plough land is generally denoted by the terms such as Urvara[23] and Ksetra.[24] The real distinction between the Ksetra and the Uravara seems to be this: the Ksetra meant all the fields of a man's holding, while Urvara meant the cultivated protion only.

Measurement Of Fields:

Vedic texts refer to the institution of land measurement. We are expressly told that the "Ribhus with a rod (Tejana) measured as it were a field".[24a] The Atharvaveda mentions two units of measurement, the Abhisu,[24b] lit., rein-evidently short measure and the Vyama[25] denoting the 'span' of the outstretched arms estimated at about six feet[26] or a fathom.[27]

Irrigation And Drainage:

From the earliest time, irrigation has always played an important part in the agricultural industry of India. In the Rigveda, we find many references to irrigation.

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22. Chand. VIII.5,3.
23. R.V.I.127,6; IV.41,6; V.33,4; VI.25,4; X.30,3; 142,3. etc.; A.V.X.6,33; 10,8; XIV.2,14, etc.
24. R.V.I.100,18; IX.85,4; A.V.IV.18,5; V.31,4; X.1,18; XI. 1,22; Taitt. Sam. II.2,1,2; Chand. VII.24,2.
24a. R.V.I.110,5. Cf. II.15,3; III.38,3.
24b. A.V.VI.137,2.
25. A.V.V.137,2; Taitt. Sam. V.1,1,4; 2,8,1, etc.; Sat. Br. X.2,3, 1.2; I.2,5,14, etc.
26. Vedic Index. II.339.
27. Eggeling, S.B.E., 41, 309, n.8.

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One epithet of waters or apah is'Khanitrima:'[28], produced by digging.It clearly refers to artificial water channels used for irrigation.The word Avata[29] denotes a well,artificially made (Khan-'to dig')in contrast with a spring (Usta),though the latter expression is also applied to an artificial well. Such wells are described as "unfailing and full of water".[30] Wells are also denoted by terms such as Kupa[31] and Suda[32] etc. Water was raised out of wells by means of well-wheels called Ghati-chakra or Araghatta.[32a] According to Muir[33] Kulya refers to artificial water courses flowing into a reservoir (Hrada).[34] Water was raised from the well by means of a wheel (cakra),a strap and water pails and also perhaps by buckets tied by rope to one end of a long wooden pole, working about a fulcrum near the other end that carried a heavy weight.[35] In the Atharvaveda also such references are not wanting.[36] The same crude method is still prevalent in the rural parts of northern India pointing to the conservatism and stubbornness of peasantry in our country.

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28. R.V.VII.49,2;A.V.I.6,4;XIX.2,2.
29. R.V.I.55,8;IV.17,16;VIII.49,6;X.25,4,etc.
30. R.V.X.101,6.
31. R.V.I.105,17;A.V.V.31,8;Sat.Br.III.5,4,1;IV.4,5,3;VI.3,3, 26. et seq.
32. R.V.VII.36,3;IX.97,4.
32a. R.V.X.25,45;X.93,13.
33. R.V.III.45,3;X.43,7.
34. Muir,Sanskrit Texts,5,465,466.
35. R.V.X.101,5.6.7.
36. A.V.III.13.

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Aryans also seem to have depended on the Monsoons.The importance of rains is clearly associated with the importance attached to agriculture in those days.Hymns addressed to gods to bring showers in rainy season and the sentiments inspired by rain-fall would clearly bear the testimony.[36a]

Tillage And Tilling Implements:

The culture of the land is the first and foremost operation in agricultural production.Plough happened to be the implement utilised for such purposes from the dawn of civilization. Macdonell points out that the Indians must have known the cultivation of the soil (Krsi)long before they separated from the Iranians as is indicated by the identity of expressions yavam krs and sasya in the Rigveda with yao karesh and hahya in the Avesta,referring to the ploughing in of the seed and to the grain which resulted.[37] While the hostory of plough-cultivation in India is not clear,the recent discovery of furrow marks below the Harappan levels at Kalibangan shows that it was practised by the pre-Harappans.[38]However Kosambi thinks that the plough was not employed by the Harappans for turning the soil.[39]He writes that the "advance of plough-using agrarian village economy over tribal India is a great historical achievement by itself."[40]Plough was definitely known to the Vedic Aryans

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36a. R.V.V.83;VII.102,2;V.8,10;I.19,7,etc.
37. Vedic Index I.181.
38. Indian Archaeology 1968-69-a Review,1971.P.29.
39. D.D.Kosambi,An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History,Bombey,1956,P.64.R.S.Sharma is of the view that the Harappans dug soil themselves without the plough, R.S.Sharma,Light on Early Indian Society and Economy.
40. D.D.Kosambi,An Introduction To The Study Of Indian History,11.

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and is denoted by Various words such as Vrka,[41] Sira,[42] Langala[43] and Sila.[44] The ploughshare was well known as Phala.[45] The operation of tilling the soil meant the cutting of furrows (Sita)[46] in the feild with the ploughshare. But it is not without significance that the expressions for ploughing occur mainly in the first and tenth mandalas of the Rigveda, and only rarely in the so called 'family mandalas' (II-VII).[47] Although plouhing is mentioned in the Rigveda,[48] in the Atharvaveda Prthi Vainya is credited with the origination of ploughing.[49] The cultivators (Kinasha)[50] ploughed the ground, the plough being drawn by two oxen. These bulls were fastened to the yoke with hempen or leather traces[51] and driven with a goad.[52] The plough must have been sometimes large and heavy, as its shown by the fact that six oxen,[53] or eight oxen,[54] or twelve,[55] or even twentyfour,[56] were used to drag it.[57] It may be interesting to note that the ancient

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41. R.V.I.117,21; VIII.22,6.
42. R.V.IV.57,8; X.101,3.4; A.V.VI.30,1; VIII.9,16; Taitt.Br.I. 7,1,2; II.5,8,12; Vaj.Sam.V.2,5,2; Kath.Sam.XVIII.7, Mait.Sam. II.11,4.
43. R.V.IV.75,4; A.V.II.8,4; Taitt.Sam.VI.6,7,4.
44. Kapisthala Samhita, XXVIII.8.
45. R.V.IV.57,8; X.117,7; Kath.Sam.XIX.1, Cf. su-phala, A.V.III. 17,5; Mait.Sam.II.7,12.
46. R.V.IV.57,6.7; A.V.XI.3,12; Taitt.Sam.V.2,5,4; Kath.Sam.XX.3.
47. Vedic Index, I.181.
48. R.V.I.117,21; X.34,13; X.106,2; X.101,3; I.17,6;
49. A.V.VIII.10,24.
50. R.V.IV.57,8; A.V.IV.11,10; VI.30,1; Vaj.Sam.XXX.11; Taitt.Br. II.4,8,7.
51. R.V.X.101,3; A.V.III.25,5.
52. R.V.IV.57,4; X.10,8; Cf.VI.53,9.
53. A.V.VI.51,1; VIII.9,16; Taitt.Sam.V.2,5,1; Kath.Sam.XV.2; XXX 3; Sat.Br.VII.2,2,6; XIII.8,2,6.
54. A.V.VI.91,1.
55. Taitt.Sam.I.8,7,1; V.2,5,1; Kath.Sam.XV.2; Mait.Sam.II.6,2, etc.
56. Kath.Sam.XV.2.
57. V.Gordon Childe, What Happened in History, 1942, P.242.

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Germans also invented "a system of tillage appropriate to the heavy claylands of North European forests-deep cultivation by eight oxen."[57] On the basis of the description of the plough[58] as lance pointed (paviravat or paviravam),'well lying'(susimam),and 'having a well smoothed handle'(tsaru), Buch suggests that the "ploughshare therefore was made of iron,and it supplanted the older plough-share made of Khadira[59] wood."[60] He is supported by Dr.Ghosh who holds that there "need also be no doubt that in the later Vedic times ploughshares were made of iron."[61] Little is known of the parts of plough.

Agricultural Operations:

The main agricultural operations are summed up in the Satapatha Brahmana as "ploughing,sowing,reaping,and threshing."[62] The ripe grain was cut with a sickle (Datra,[63] Srni)[64],bound into bundles (Parsa),[65] and beaten out of the floor of the granary (khala).The grain was then separated from the straw and refuse either by a sieve(Titau)[66] or in a winnowing fan.

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57. V.Gordon Childe,What Happened in History,1942,P.242.
58. A.V.III.17,3=Taitt.Sam.IV.2,5,6= Kath.SamXVI.11=Mait.Sam. II.7,12;Vaj.Sam.XII.71.
59. A.V.V.6,6.
60. M.A.Buch,Economic Life in Ancient India,Vol.I.P.54.
61. A.Ghosh,The City In Early Historical India,1973,P.7-8.
62. Sat.Br.I.6,1,3.
63. R.V.VIII.78,10.
64. R.V.I.58,4;X.101,3.Sat.Br.VII.2,2,5.
65. R.V.X.48,7.
66. R.V.X.71,2.

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(Surpa).[67] The winnower was called Dhanyakrt,[68] and the grain was measured in a vessel called Urdara.[69]

Manures And Manuring:

The value of manure in cultivation was appreciated in India as early as the time of the Rigveda. But the ancient Indians did not apparently know the use of chemicals as artificial fertilizers; they have come into use only about hundred years ago. Excrements seem to be utilized as manure. We find the Ribhus separating Sakrt[70] or dung from the other parts. The word Karisa[71] denoting 'dry cow dung' also shows that the use of the natural manure of animals in the fields was appreciated.[72] Matya in the Brahmana portions of the Samhitas according to Sayana also denotes manure.[73]

Cultivation Of Crops:

From the earliest time barley, wheat and rice seem to have been the staple food of the vast population of India. That the barley was culivated in the period of the Rigveda[74] is not certain, but on the whole very probable.[75] The word 'Yava[76]

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67. R.V.X.71,2; A.V.XII.3,19.
68. R.V.X.94,13.
69. R.V.II.14,11.
70. R.V.I.161,10; A.V.XII.4,9; Taitt.Sam.VII.1,19,3,etc.
71. Sat.Br. II.1,1,7.
72. A.V.III.3.4; XIX.31,3.
73. Taitt. Sam.VI.6,7,4; Kath.Sam.XXIX.4; Panca.Br.II.9,2.
74. Hopkins, Journal of the American Oriental Society, 17,86,n.
75. Vedic Index II.187.
76. R.V.I.23,15; II.5,6; V.85,3; VII.3,4; VIII.2,3,etc.

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in the Rigveda appears to be a generic term for any sort of 'grain',and not merely 'barley! However "Yavam Briken Karshagha" (I have cultivated barley with the help of your plough)[77] may indicate the cultivation of barley in the early Vedic age . In the later vedic age Yava definitely means barley.[78] The barley harvest came after spring,[79] in the summer,[80] In the later Vedic literature,we meet with varieties of grains.Rice (Vrihi)[81] was sown in the rainy season and reaped in the autumn.[82] The Aryans seem to have cultivated different varieties of rice such as Maha-Vrihi[83] (large rice),Sastika (ripening in sixty days),Plasuka (aswift growing variety),black rice , white rice[84] and Nivara[85] (wild rice)etc. We have already referred to various grains and fruits in the previous chapter under food and drinks and it need not be repeated here.[86] The Brihada-aranyaka Upanisad mentions ten kinds of cultivated (gramya) grains:rice and barley (vrihiyah),sesamum (tila),beans (masa), millet,panick seed (anu-priyangavah),wheat (godhum),litel (masura),pulse and Vetch (khala-kulah).[87] The seasons for

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77. R.V.VIII.22,6.
78. A.V.II.8,3;VI.30,1;VIII.7,20;IX.1,22;XII.1,42;Taitt.Sam.VI. 2,10,3;VII.2,10,2;Kath.SamXXV.10; Mait.Sam.IV.3,2;Vaj.Sam.V. 26;Taitt.Br.I.8,4,1;Sat.Br.I.1,4,20;II.5,2,1;etc.;Chand.III. 14.3;Kaus.Br.IV.12.
79. Kaus.Br.IV.13.
80. Taitt.Sam.VII.2,10,2.
81. MW.VI.140,2;VIII.7,20;IX.6,14,etc.;Taitt.Sam.VII.2,10,3; Mait.Sam.III.10,2;Kath.Sam.X.6;XI.5;Vaj.Sam.XVIII.12;Ait. Br.II.8,7;VIII.16,3.4;Sat.Br.V.5,5,9;Brih.VI.3,22;Chand.III. 14,3.
82. Taitt.Sam.VII.2,10,2.
83. A.V.XI.4,13;Jaim.Br.I.43;Chand.V.10,6 etc.
84. Taitt.Sam.I.8,1,10.
85. Kath.Sam.XI.4;Mait.Sam.III.4,10;Sat.Br.V.1,4,14 etc.
86. For Detailed references see page... of this thesis.
87. Brih.VI.3,13.

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agriculture are briefly summed up in a passage of the Taittiriya Samhitā.[88] There were two harvests a year[89] and the winter crop was ripe by the month of Caitra[90] (March-April),

Sequence of Cropping:

From the Rigveda[91] it appears that crops were grown in the same field by rotation and the system of fallowing was also known. "The cultivators harvesting the crops in general, saperately and in due order[92] has been interpreted to be giving an idea of crop-sequence or crop rotation and line sowing and avoiding overlapping during harvest. In the Yajurveda, a distinct references to the rotation of crops are found. The importance attached to food quantity in Anna Sukta[93] shows that arable farming was given equal importance as stock farming. The praise of land, bullocks, seeds and peasants in various hymns clearly indicates the importance attached to arable farming, crop husbandry with different types of field grasses for food and fodder being considered for the dual purpose of man and animal.[94]

Yava, although it literally means barley, has been taken as a grain crop in several Vedic translations. Aryans might

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88. Taitt.Sam.VII.2,10,2.
89. Taitt.Sam.V.1,7,3.
90. Kaus.Br.XIX.3.
91. R.V.VIII.91,5-6.
92. R.V.X.131,2.
93. R.V.I.187.
94. R.V.X.27,8.

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be using for their cattle, either the crop at the field stage as green fodder or the green for human beings and its straw and bhusa for cattle feeding.

Protection Of Crops:

In the Rigvedic period the cultivators kept away birds from the corn fields by making din and noise.[95] Destruction of corn by locusts, mice, and borer and their protection is described in the Atharvaveda.[96] "Smite, O Ashvins, the borer, the samanka, the rat, split their head; crush in their ribs; lest they eat the barley; shut up their mouth; then make fearlessness for the grain. O lord of borers, lord of vaghas, with arid jaws do ye listen to me. What devourers there are of the forests, and whatever devourers ye are, all of them do we grind up."[97] "Kesava and Sayana in their introduction to the ceremonies prescribed in connection with this hymn at Kausika 51, 17-22 mention a long list of pestiferous insects. The performances are as follows. 17. While the hymn is being cited, the performer ploughs a furrow with an iron plough about the field. 18. He scatters stones upon the field. 19. He ties a hair through the mouth of a tarda (insect) and buries him head downward into the middle of the field. 20. He while walking offers thrice to the Aświns milk of a cow with a calf of the same colour as herself. 21. He offers a Bali offering to Asa (region) Asapati, to the two aswins and to Kshtrapati.

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95. R.V.X.68, 1.
96. A.V.VI.50.
97. Ibid.

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22. On the day he performs the ceremonies,he shall remain silent up to the time of sun-set."In the Atharvaveda wishes are also expressed that the grain may not be smitten by lightning,and by the suns'rays.[98] The Atharvaveda provides with a considerable number of spells to avoid blight and secure a good harvest. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad says that locust (Matacī) blighted the face of the Kuru land by ruining its crops so that a sage had to move to a neighbouring country along-with his wife and live on sour gruel (Kulmasa).[99]

Cattle-Breeding And Livestock:

"The raising of animals is as old as civilization itself; for our common domestic animals were domesticated before the beginning of written history.Palaeolithic man hunted animals for food and raiment;his successor, the Neolithic man,tamed and confined them.It was in the Neolithic or New Stone age that men first practised agriculture,which included the raising of domestic animals."[100]

Cattle-breeding was one of the most important branch of economic life of the early Vedic Aryan villages.The cattle played a vital roll in the economy of the Aryan settlers.The cattle are so intimately associated with the science and practice of agriculture,that in the Vedic literature,they have been dealt with simultaneously.It was the principal means of sustenance.We have already referred to the great importance

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98. A.V.VII.11;IV.15;VI.128.
99. Brih.I.10,1;Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,1911,P.510.
100.A.L.Anderson,Introductory Animal Husbandry.

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attached to the cattle in the rural life of the Vedic age. There are more references to the pastoral life in the Rigveda than to agriculture. In the Rigveda Usas is described as proceeding eastwards as quickly as a cow going to the grazing field.[101] Indra is requested to dissuade his devotee from evil as a cow satisfied with a feed to grass, turns its calf away.[102] We are told that Indra nourishes a sacrificer as a good cowherd nourishes cows.[103] Indra and Varuna are requested to please the prayer as a bull satisfies a cow.[104] As a cow - herd drives cattle hither and thither so Indra flings enemies far away.[105] We have the description of Somarasa entering into pitchers as cows entering to pasture.[106] As a cow herd looks towards a herd of cows, so the Sun looks on all creatures and places.[107] In the Rigveda there are numerous similes using cows.[108]

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101. R.V.I.92,4.
102. R.V.II.16,5.
103. R.V.III.45,3.
104. R.V.IV.41,5.
105. R.V.V.31,1.
106. R.V.VI.41,1.
107. R.V.VII.60,3.
108. R.V.I.38,2;38,8;62,2;66,5;95,16;104,5;II.34,8;34,15;35,1; III.52,5;IV.2,18;5,3;12,6;13,2;34,5;41,5;57,2;V.1,1;2,4; 31,1;33,10;34,7;53,7;55,16;56,4;59,3;VI.12,4;17,39;24,4; 29,5;41,1;45,7;45,25;46,4;VII.2,6;23,4;60,3;VIII.1,2;33,6; 41,6;60,13;65,3;69,11;72,14;75,5;81,3;92,12;100,11;101,13; IX.12,2;47,1;66,12;69,1;71,3;71,9;94,2;100,7;X.45,5;8,1; 8,2;20,2;21,8;23,6;31,10;42,2;46,2;75,4;101,9;111,2;115,2; 143,6;145,6;149,4;176,1.

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Through the use of a simile construction,associations are established which reveal the value and thought patterns peculiar to a people.Some of the similes demonstrate a particular cultural reaction to economic usefulness of the cattle in general and cow in particular.The cultural attitudes are reflected in the choice of imagery and in the selection of the subjects these images are compared with.From these similes it is learnt that in the early morning the cattle streams from their pen and are driven with sticks[109] presumably into the grazing grounds.There they wander freely about searching for food with apparent relish.In the pasture, mother cow low to the calf[110] and lavishly protect,nourish and fondle it.As the dusk approaches,the cattle are led back to the warmth of the covered stalls;by the time it is dark they have settled in the pens.[111] In what a high esteem the cows had been held,is quite clear in innumerable verses used for the oblation and praise of cows.Oxen were used for ploughing and drawing wagons.Draught oxen were generally castrated. The testes were crushed with claspers (Sheshmana)or squeezed between press stones. [112] The tip of the horns of oxen were sharpened,[113] and were decked with ornament.[114]

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109. R.V.VII.33,6.
110. R.V.II.2,2;VIII,88,1;Cf.Vedic Index,I.232.
111. R.V.I. 191,4.
112. A.V.III.9,2;VI.138,2.
113. R.V.VI.16,39.
114. R.V.VIII.54,10.

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Cowherds took cows to pastures daily.On return from the pastures,they were kept in stalls.The word Vraja meant the 'feeding-ground'to which the milkgiving animals went out in the morning from the village,while others stayed in it all day and night.[115]It also meant cow-pen or the stall.[116] Gostha also denoted a grazing ground.[117]The cows were milked in the morning (prater-doha),afternoon (samgava)and evening (sayan-doha).[118]During the heat of the day the cows were milked under a shed or in an enclosure called Samgavinā.[119]Cattle were led to the pasture thrice every-day.[120]Ears of the cattle were sometimes marked to distinguished the ownership.[121]Some cattle had the sign of eight marked on the ear(Aṣṭakarṇi)while others had the mark of the sickle on the ear.[122]

The villagers in the Vedic age also tended other cattle such as sheep(Avi),[123]goat(Aja[124]or Ajā or Chāga[125]),buffalo (Uṣṭi,Uṣtra[126])and horses.[127]Terms such as Pasu-pa[128](herdsman),

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115. R.V.II.38,8;X.26,3.
116. R.V.X.4,2;A.V.III.11,5;IV.38,7.
117. Ait.Br.III.18,14.
118. Taitt.Sam.VIII.5,30,1.
119. Aitt.Br.Loc.cit.
120. R.V.I.66,5;Tait t.Br.I.4,9,2.
121. A.V.VI.141,2.
122. R.V.X.62,7;Mait.Sam.IV.2,9.
123. R.V.VIII.34,3;IX.109,16;VIII.67,3 etc.;A.V.V.8,4;VajSam. XIII.50.
124. A.V.IX.5,1;Vaj.Sam.XXI.9,etc.
125. R.V.I.162,3;Vaj.Sam.XIX.89;XXI.40.41;Sat.Br.III.3,3,8; V.1,3,14;Mait.Sam.III.11,2.
126. R.V.I.138,2;VIII.5,37;6,48;46,22.31;A.V.XX.127,2;Vaj.Sam. XIII.50;Sat.Br.I.2,3,9;Ait.Br.II.8;Roth,St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.
127. R.V.X.75,5;I.3,10;II.41,8,etc.;Brih.VI.2,13 etc.
128. R.V.I.114,9;IV.6,4;X.142,2.

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Gopala,[129] Avi-pala,[130] Ajapala would indicate that the cattle - rearing was an established occupation of the Vedic Aryans and on the whole cattle were taken extremely good care of.

Ownership Of Agricultural Land:

We have already referred to the question of ownership of land in the Vedic age in the first chapter in the context of genesis of the village. Here it would suffice to sum up very briefly the various views of the scholars on this subject. V.A.Smith and J.N.Samaddar hold that the land belong to the king. Buhler, Shamasastry, Hopkins and Breloer also support this view. Sir Henry Maine holds the view that agricultural land was owned and cultivated by men grouped in village communities. Chief exponents of the theory of individual ownership of land are Baden powell, Dr.K.P.Jayaswal and P.N.Banerjee. We have already referred to the evidences which point to the existence of private ownership of land even as early as the Rigvedic age.[131]

Principles Of Division Of Property:

The word 'Dāya' does not occur in the Vedas in the sense of 'inheritance.' In the Rigveda[132] it means 'reward'. Sons had a right in the property of their father. Manu is said to have divided his property among his sons.[133] We have already pointed

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129. Vedic Index.1.232.
130. Vaj.Sam.XXX.11; Sat.Br.IV.1,5,2.
131. For References and other details regarding the ownership of land please see page ... of this thesis.
132. R.V.X.114,10.
133. Taitt.Sam.III.1,9,4 et seq.

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out in the first chapter that mostly the evidence of division of property relates to moveable property rather than land in the Vedas.[134] The property was equally divided among the sons.'O Sire,men obtain wealth from you as sons obtain from their old father![135] As for the method of division,it is clear from the Taittiriya Samhita[136] that the elder brother was usually preferred,a sentiment which still persists in the villages in our country.The rights of unmarried girl are fully recognized. '(O Indra) as the daughter being with her parents ask for sahre of wealth from the father's family.'[137] The daughter who was the only child of her parents was made Putrika i.e.,her son was entitled to perform the funeral rites of her father , and she was entitled to her father's property.'The sonless man who has a daughter fit to be a Putrika having observed the Putrika rite gets the son of that daughter as his son's son, knowing that this daughter's son will perform his Sraddha.[138] Married girl with brother was entitled to inherit her father's property."The legitimate son of the body does not give inheritance to the sister."[139]

Trade And Commerce :

In the Rigveda we meet clear references to trade in distant lands for profit.[140] There are prayers for "graining

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134.Vadic Index.I.352.
135. R.V.I.70,5.
136. Taitt.Sam.II-5,2,7.
137. R.V.II.17,7.
138. R.V.III.31,1.
139. R.V.III.1,2.
140. R.V.I.[illegible] 56,2.

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a hundred treasures."[141] Perhaps merchants sought divine help for success in trade. There are references to buying and selling and exchange of goods, prices in the Vedic literature. Mostly it was exchange of goods for goods or barter, the medium of exchange currect even in our own times in the rural parts of the country. For the early Aryans settlers cow was a unit of wealth.[142] Besides cattle, ornaments, grains and gold was also used in exchange transactions.[143] There might have been other recognized units of value. As early as Rigveda traces are seen of the use of Nishkas as a sort of currency. "A hundred Nishkas from the king, beseeching, a hundred gift-steeds I atonce accepted."[144] When the poet celebrates the receipt of a hundred Nishkas with a hundred horses, as a gift, he could hardly be referring to a hundred necklets merely for puproses of personal adornment.[145] Probably it came to be used as a sort of currency. During the later veidc age, the Śatamāna also must have been in use as a currency.[146] In the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad[147] we have reference to pada which might have stood for a coin. Krisnala must have been in use as currency among the merchants.[148] But barter did not entirely disappear and medium of exchange

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141. R.V.III.18,3.
142. R.V.IV.24,10.
143. R.V.61,5;IV.17,11;VI.25,4;IX.69,8;VIII.46,22;X.97,4.
144. R.V.I.126,2.
145. Vedic Index I.455.
146. Sat.Br.V.4,3,24;V.5,5,16.
147. Brih.III.1,1.
148. Taitt.Br.I.3,6,7;Kath.Sam.XI.4.

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was often cow.[149] "Who for ten milch-kine purchaseth for me this Indra who is mine?"[150] Haggling over proces was an interesting feature of the trade in this age ."He bid small price for a thing of value:I was content,returning still unparchased.He heightened not his in sufficient offer. Simple and clever,both milk out the udder."[151] Thus here it is stated that once a seller received less price from a buyer for a commodity,the real price of which was much more than the price given.So he demanded more,Saying that the article was not yet sold and did not accept the low price.The poet here observes that the persons clever and unclever ,thus first dispute and then only receive what is finally settled at the time of actual sale .That considerable amount of haggling over prices was prevalent is also shown by a passage in the Satapatha Brahmana[152] where the priest on behalf of a sacrificer went to buy Soma from a seller but price is not settled untill he asks the latter for the fifth time.

In the Vedas we have references to borrowing and lending. Rina or debt is repeatedly mentioned in the Vedic literature.[153] There are reference to money-lending.Kusidin is a designation of the usurer in the Satapatha Brahmana.[154] In the Taittiriya Samhita[155] Kusida occurs in the sense of a loan.

149.Vedic Index 1.234.
150. R.V.IV.24,10.
151. R.V.IV.24,9.
152. Sat.Br.III.3,3,1-4.
153. R.V.II.27,4;X.34,10;A.V.VI.113,1 etc.
154. Sat.Br.XIII.4,3,11.
155. Taitt.Sam.III.3,6,1;Cf.Mait.Sam.IV.14,17;Taitt.Ar.II. 3,1,XXX 8.

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Developed inland and sea-borne trade can-not be regarded as a rural phenomenon and so it need not be discussed in detail.The Vedic expression for a merchant is,perhaps, Pani which occurs several times in the Vedic texts.[156]The initial dislike for the Panis testifies that the Aryans,who were a rural folk not much interested in trade and commerce. Numerous references to their fight with the Panis,according to Ludwig,are to be explained by their having been aboriginal traders.

Village Industries And Occupations:

Spinning and weaving as a village industry obtained a firm footing in the Vedic age.In the Vedic literature there are a great number of references to spinning and weaving, sometimes by way of similes andmetaphors ."As rats eat weaver's thread,cares are consuming me."[157]In a remarkable passage we have a complete description of the process of weaving: "The sacrifice drawn out with threads on everyside,stretched by a hundred sacred ministers and one-This do these Father's weave who hitherward are come:they sit beside the wrap and cry,Weave forth,weave back.The man extends it and the Man unbinds it :Even to this vault of heaven hath he out-spun it . These pegs are fastened to the seat of worship:they made the Sama hymns their weaving shuttles."[158]We have already referred

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156. R.V.I.33,3;IV.28,7;V.34,5-7;VI.13,3;VIII.64,2;X.60,6;A.V. V.11,7;XX.128,4;Vaj.Sam.XXXV.1;St.Petersburg Dictionary,s.v.; Zimmer,AL. 257;Ludwig,Der Rig Veda.3.213-215.

157. R.V.X.33,3;I.105.8.

158. R.V.X.130,1-2.For further references to spinning and weaving-R.V.X.56,16;IX.22,6;IX.86,32;I.42,1;VII.33,9;VII. 29,3;IX.102,7 et seq.

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to terms such as Otu (woof)and Tantra (warp)in the previous chapter.The word for a spindle was Tarku.[159]The shuttle used in the process weaving was called Tasara.[160]The term for weaver is Vaya and for the loom,Veman.[162]Dyeing [163]and tailoring can also be inferred from the Rigveda.[164]The art of tanning hides is also referred to in the Rigveda.The Satapatha Brahamana refers to the stretching out of a hide with pegs.[165]

The carpenter's art showed itself in all types of wood-work.A large number of similes and metaphors drawn from the art of fashioning chariots,carts etc.clearly show that carpentry was an honoured profession.In an agricultural society it is quite natural because he was the man who made plough, carts and wagons which are indispensable for a rural agricultural society.Tvastr is employed once in the Atharvaveda[165a] to denote a 'carpenter',with a delibrate play on the name of god Tvastr.He is there mentioned as using an axe (svadhiti) to fashion (from wood)'a well made form '(rupam sukrtam).[165b]

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159. Nirukta ,II.1.
160. R.V.X.130,1-2.
161. R.V.X.26,6.
162. Vaj.Sam.,XIX.80.
163. R.V.IX.96,1.
164. Wilson's Rigveda,II.288.
165. R.V.I.85,5;X.94,9;X.106,10;1.191,10;1.83,8;VI.75,14;A.V. VI.67,3;Ait,Br,V.32;Sat.Br.II.1,11,9.
165a. A.V.XII.3,33.
165b. Vedic Index I.334.

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The carpenter (Takshan)was a familiar figure in the Vedic village."He,like a carpenter whose back is aching crouched and slunk away."[165c] References of naves (nabhi),[166] spokes fellies (nabhya,upadhi, pradhi),[167] wheels (Chakra)[168] shows his skill in wood-work. He made chairs (Asandi),[169] cots (Vahyam)[170] and other necessary articles of a rural household. The carpenter showed his admirable skill in all sorts of wood-work.One of the most admirable types of carpentry could be seen in references to fine wooden carvings[171] and in the making of musical instruments.[172]

The advance of civilization may also be seen in the knowledge of metals and the large number of mining industries of this period.There were various words in use for metals in the Vedic India.The exact meaning of the word Ayas[173] in the Rigveda cannot be ascertained.Zimmer thinks that it denotes bronze.[174]"it may have been either cooper,bronze,or iron,if be suppose that the word is consistently used in the same sense;

165c. R.V.X.105,8.

166. R.V.V.43,8;VI.39,4 etc.;A.V.III.30,6;X.8,34;XI.7,4;Kath. Sam.XI.4;Brih.II.5,11;Ait.Ar.III.2,4;Kaus.Up.III.8.

167. R.V.II.39,4.

168. R.V.I.130,9;155,6;164,2;174,5;IV.1,3 etc.;A.V.XI.7,4;IX.53, 1.2,etc.;Chand.IV.16,5;Kaus.Up.I.4.

169. A.V.XIV.65,

170. A.V.VI.5,3.

171. R.V.X.65,5;I.161,9;III.60,2.

172. R.V.VII.56,9;IX.1,8;A.V.IV.37,4.

173. R.V.I.157,3;IV.2,17;VI.3,5 etc.

174. Zimmer AL.,52.Cf.R.V.I.166,10;X.67,2;V.62,8.

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but it is also possible that it is used in more senses than one."[175] The Vajasaneyi Samhita enumerates a list of six metals: gold (hiranya), Ayas, Syama, Loha, lead (sisa), tin (trapu).[176] In the Satapatha Brahmana[177] a distinction is drawn between the Ayas and Lohāyas, which may either be a distinction between iron and copper as under stood by Eggeling,[178] or between copper and bronze as held by Schrader.[179] The worker in metal smelted ore in the furnace using the wing of a bird as a bellows to fan the flames. In a hymn it has been stated that Brahmanspati creates everything just as the smelter melts the metal and makes implements from it. The Satapatha Brahmana [181] states that if 'well smelted' (bahu-dhmatam) it is like gold, referring evidently to bonze. A verse in Chandogya Upanisad shows that most of the metals as well as their properties were sufficiently known to the Vedic Indians. "As gold is joined by salt, silver by gold, zinc by silver, lead by zinc, iron by lead, wood by iron and leather by wood."[182] The village blacksmith (Karmar) must have been a busy man and we hear him manufacturing ploughshares, sickles, pots, goads and needles, besides many other objects of daily use.[183] The metal bowls were probably made of

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175. The Vedic Age, 397.
176. Vaj Sam., XVIII.13.
177. Sat.Br.V.4,1,2.
178. S.B.E., 41,90.
179. Schrader, Prehistoric Antiquities, 189.
180. R.V.X.72,2.
181. Sat.Br.VI.1,3,5; Cf.VI.1,1,13; V.1,2,16; XII.7,1,7; 7,10 etc.
182. Chand.IV.17.
183. R.V.I.162,10; V.58,2; VII.10,5; VIII.4,6; IX.100,9 etc.

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bronze.[184] The gold (candra,[185] hiranya)[186] and silver (rajata)[187] and other precious gems are referred in the Vedic texts. The extraction of the gold from the earth was also known. "Ye brought forth Vandana...like fair gold that hath been buried."[188] Gold was obtained from the ore by smelting.[189] Gold smiths melted gold and prepared all sorts of ornaments. from them."And as a gold-smith taking a piece of gold,turns it into another,newer and more beautiful shape!"[190] Numerous references to gold testifies the traditional Indian fondness of gold.The epithets "refulgent as bright gold","brilliant as gold",are spread all over the Vedas.[191]

Potteries were in use and the Vedic Indians used burned earth for constructive these.Water and wine were not kept in unburnt earthen ware.Bessels made of hides and skins were used for keeping curds,wine,water,mead etc.[192] The art of the tanner (charmamnā)[193] and the use of hide was well known.

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184. A.V.X.10,5.

185. R.V.II.2,4;III.31,5;A.V.XII.2,53;Taitt.Sam.I.2,7,1;Kath. Sam.II.6;Vaj.Sam.IV.26; Panca.Br.VI.6;Sat.Br.III3,3,4 etc.

186. R.V.I.43,5;III.34,9;IV.10,6 etc.;A.V.I.9,2;II.36,7;V.28,6; VI.38,2 etc.;Cf.Taitt.Sam.V.7,1,3;Taitt.Br.I.3,3,7;Sat.Br. V. 1,2,19 etc.

187. A.V.V.28,1;XIII.4,51;Ait.Br.VII.12,2;Chand.IV.17,7 etc.; Cf.Kath.Sam.X.4;Sat.Br.XII.4,4,7;XIII.4,2,10 etc.

188. R.V.I.117,5;A.V.XII.1,6.26.

189. Sat.Br.XII.4,3,1 etc.

190. Brih.IV.4,4.

191. R.V.I.43,6;IV.10,6;Cf.A.V.XIX.26.

192. R.V.VIII.5,19.

193. R.V.VIII.5,38.

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Ox-hide was employed in the manufacture of bow-strings, thongs, reins and the lash of the whip.[194] Leather casks were made for holding liquor. To prepare Soma, vessels made from cowhide were used, and therefore some method must have been evolved to tan the raw hides.[195] The Satapatha Brahmana[196] refers to the stretching out of a hide with pegs.[196]

Many of the occupations and professions like that of herdsmen, agriculturists, weavers, blacksmiths, physicians have been already incidently referred to in the previous pages. Although early Vedic Aryans had already advanced from the hunting stage, yet hunting as profession is mentioned in the Rigveda. Mragu, 'hunter' occurs in the later Samhitas[197] and the Brahmanas,[198] but not very often. Nets[199] and pitfalls[200] were the usual means for catching animals as well as birds. Among other occupations mention may be made of barber (vaptri),[201] dancers (nrtu),[202] Soothsayer (Sakadhumas)[203] or the weather-

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194. R.V.VI.75,11;I.121,9;VI.47,26;46,14;53,9 etc.
195. R.V.I. 85,5;X.94,9;X.106,10;I.191,10;A.V.VI.67,3;Ait.Br. V.32 etc.
196. Sat.Br.II.1,11,9.
197. A.V.X.1,26;Vaj.Sam.XIV.27;XXX.7,etc.;Cf.mrganyu,R.V.X.40,4.
198. Taitt.Br.I.5,1,1;III.4,3,1;Panca.Br.XIV.9,12,etc.
199. Pasa,R.V.III.45,1;Nindha,A.V.X.1,30;Jala,R.V.IX.83,4.
200. R.V.X.39,8;X.28,10;V.74,4.
201. R.V.X.142,4;A.V.VIII.2,17;Taitt-Br.I.5,6,3.
202. R.V.8.92,4.
203. A.V.VI.76,2;VI.128,1.

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prophet, fisher-man (punjistha),[204] potters (kulala),[205] washer-man (malaga)[206] etc. The butcher's profession (samitri)[206a] was also probably known. The vajasaneyi Samhita refers to a very long list of professions[207] and gives us the diversification of social and economic life implied their in. The dignity of labour was fully recognized in the society and Aryans did not think it below their dignity to adopt any profession needed by the society.

Means Of Transport:

The path-making is referred to in the Rigveda.[208] The high road between the two villages was called Mahapatha.[209] Roads were often lined with trees, specially with that of Asvattha and Nyagrodha.[210] Horses (akra)[211] were used for riding.[212] In the Vedic texts we meet various terms for draft wagons, carts and chariots. Anas denotes the draft wagon as opposed to the chariot.[213] Sakata is also used to denote a cart.[213a] The creaking of a cart is referred to in the Rigveda as like the sound heard by night in the forest.[213b] Chariot was the only

204. A.V.X.4,19; Vaj.Sam.XXX.16; Taitt.Sam.III.4,12,1.
205. A.V.IV.17,4.
206. A.V.XII.3,21.
206a. R.V.I.162,9; II.3,10; III.4,10, etc.
207. Vaj.Sam.XXX.
208. R.V.II.23,6; VI.21,12; IX.106,5; X.14,15, etc,; A.V.XVIII.2,53; 3,25 etc.
209. Ait. Br.IV.17,8; Chand.VIII.6,2.
210. R.V.VII.95,5; A.V.IV.37,4.
211. R.V.I.143,7; 189,7; III.1,12; IV.6,3; X.77,2.
212. Cf.Roth.St.petersburg Dictionary.
213. R.V.IV.30,10; X.85,10; Sat.Br.I.1,2,5; Chand.VII.15,1; Kaus. Up.III.8 etc.
213a. Nirukta, VI.22; XI.47; Chand.IV.1,18.
213b. R.V.X.146,3; Sadvimsa Brahmana., IV.7.

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quick mode of transport.It was called Ratha.[214] The chariots had,as a rule,two wheels (cakra),to which reference is frequently made.[215]Vedic texts referred to various parts of the chariot.They were drawn by horses.The normal number of horses seems to have been two,but three[216]or four[217]were also sometimes used.It was considered disrespectable for a rich man to drive in a one horse chariot.[218]Horses were well tended, cleaned and bathed.[219]The bridal wagon on which Surya,the daughter of the Sun was borne,in the marriage hymn in the Rigveda, had a covering (chadis).[220]According to Dr.S.N.Misra, 'the semantics of the word Ratha is of great interest as it furnishes us the evidence not otherwise available by indicating how conveyance used by nomadic people eventually became the archetype of dwellings when they settled down in permanent abodes'.[221]

So far as water transport is concerned,boats have been frequently mentioned. We hear of boats (Nau)[222]plying in rivers. At some places sea-going boats are mentioned or implied.[223]Boats

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214. R.V.I.20,3;III.15,5;X.1,8;IV.4,10;A.V.V.14,5;X.1,8;Ait. Br.VII.12,3etc.

215. Chand.IV.16,5;Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana,III.16,7;Kaus. Up.I.4;Ait.Br.III.4,3,4;Taitt.Br.I.1,6,8;Sat.Br.II.3,3,12etc

216. R.V.I.39,6;VIII.7,28;X.33,5; Sat.Br.V.1,4,11 etc.

217. Cf.R.V.II.18,1;Sat.Br.V.4,3,17 etc.

218. A.V.XX.125,5.

219. R.V.IV.15,6.

220. R.V.X.85,10.

221. S.N.Misra,History and Archaeology,Vol.I.:Nos.1-2 P.262.

222. R.V.I.116,3;151,2;II.39,9;V.9[illegible],2;VIII.63,3;etc.;A.V.II.36,5; Taitt.Sam.V.3,10,1;Vaj.Sam.X.19;Ait.Br.IV.15;Sat.Br.I.8,1, 4 etc.

223. R.V.I.46,8;48,3;II.116,5;V.54,4;VIII.75,9.

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appear to have been propelled by oars (aritra).In a passage of the Rigveda we are told that the Asvins rescued Bhujyu in the ocean with a ship of a hundred oars (satarita).[224]"It is not easy to refuse to recognized here the existence of large vessels ~~by~~ with many oars used for csea voyages."[225]

Corporate Life:

"The spirit of cooperation is a social instinct in a man.From the most primitive period of which we posses any record, it has been manifest in human society in some form or other... in different fields of human activity,-social,political, religious and economic."[226]The rural life in the Vedic age assured the advantages of corporate life to its members,~~altough~~ although it may be difficult to support the system as it exists at present.The working of the communal idea which kept the countryside pulsating with the exuberance of life is seen in Vedic literature embedded in the tribal feeling of the Vis.[227]The corporate village life expressed itself in no less pronounced manner in a lighter and festal mood.It has been shown by a German scholar that the Vedic Sabha served as the modern club-house after the closure of its business.[228]

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224. R.V.I.116,3 et seq.
225. Vedic Index I.462.
226. R.C.Majumdar ,Corporate Life in Ancient India,9.
227. A.N.Bose ,Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, Vol.I.P.78.
228. Zimmer,AL.,172.

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We hav ve already seen that the society in the early Vedic age was classified but casteless.The dignity of labour was fully recognized and each member of the village community contributed in his own way to the welfare and happiness of the entire village.The varna system supplied the social foundation to the village community system by providing "an unalterable division of labour"in society,whereby the whole mechanism discloses a systematic division of labour"which is regulated with irresistable authority of a law of Nature" Dr.R.C.Majumdar has referred to the corporate activities in social life in his work Corporate Life in Ancient India.[229]

Even if we do not accept the materialistic interpretation of history,it is certain that the necessities of economic life had much to do with the origin and growth of different institutions in Ancient India.The villagers in the Vedic age were closely knit together by economic bonds of diverse sort.They maintained a common neathered to take charge of and graze their cattle in the adjoining pasture or forest.[230]The Vedic village lived almost an independent, atomistic,self sufficient economic existence.Self-sufficient village economy was based on an equilibrium between village agriculture and the village artisan industry.The vill gers were closely tied together by economic bonds of diverse sort.

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229. R.C.Majumdar,Corporate Life in Ancient India,310-332.
230. R.V.X.19.

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Dr. Majumdar thinks that the earliest manifestation of corporate economic activity,in a marked degree,is evidenced in the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad,when we read it with Sankaracharya's comments thereon. It is said that "on the analogy of the Brahmanas,Kshatriyas,Vaisyas and Sudras in human society, Brahma created similar classes among the gods.But he was not content by bringing into existence the first two classes alone, because they could not acquire wealth .Hence were created the Vaisyas who were called ganasah owing to the circumstance that it was by cooperation and not by individual effort that they could acquire wealth."[231] In the Vedas we have several prayers[232] that the roads may be well gaurded against possible attack of not only wild beasts but of thieves and robbers also,According to Ludwig in the Vedic texts "referrences to fights with Panis are to be explained by their having been aboriginal traders who went in caravans-as in Arabia and Northern Africa-prepared to fight if need be,to protect their goods against attacks which the Aryans would naturally deem quite justified"[233]. If we accept this meaning,we shall have necessarily to presume a corporation of merchants strong enough to defy their opponents,and carry on fight against them.Corporate orgnization of the village artisans may be inferred from the use of the words Sreshthi and gana in the Vedic texts.[234]

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231. R.C.Majumdar corporate Life in Ancient India,10.
232. R.V.VI.51,15.16;VI.49,8;A.V.XII.1,4.
233. Veidc Index.I.471.
234. R.C.Majumdar Copporate Life in Ancient India,12.

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The corporate political activity of the villagers in the Vedic age may be traced in the institution of the Kulpas. As we have already seen in the previous chapter ,they were the head of the families.They are mentioned in the Rigveda as inferior to and attendant on the Vrājpati in ~~th~~ war[235],the latter being perhaps the leader of the village contingent of the clan.[236] We have already referred to Sabhā which was a village assembly and which afforded an extensive scope for corporate activities in political field.

Self-contained Village As A Sort Of Small Republic:

We have already seen that the unit of Aryanstate was village,while the popular assembly was represented by the village communities.A net-work was gradually framed for securing first the interest of the villages and of the village communities,by taking into confidence the Village Elders,who were representatives of the various communities . These village communities having established all the crafts in their villages,that were necessary for their usual wants , as they had a variety of interests,had become independent of all foreign relations,as for as possible;and the village communities thus served as small republics.They were in every way self-governing and self-contained and contained an almost complete establishment of all occupations and trades,required for satisfying ordinary wants.This naturally enabled the Vedic villages to continue their collective life,without

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235. R.V.X.179,12=A.V.VII.92,2.
236. Vedic Index,I.171.

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in the least asking for assistance from anybody and even without depending upon others.Sir C.T.Metcalf describes the Indian village communities as"little Republics."[237] Dr.A.S.Altekar thinks that our history shows us that our village communities were never in historic times republics as Metcalfe had thought.But he agrees that in Vedic times it appears probable that each village community was an independent republic.[238]

237. C.T.Metcalfe's Report in the Select Committee of the House of commons,1832,Vol.III.Appendix 84,P.331.

238. A.S.Altekar,Village Communities in Western India,124-127.

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CHAPTER - V

RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND BELIEFS

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RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND BELIEFS

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RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND BELIEFS

A study of the rural religion and its important role in determining the life process of the rural society in the Vedic age should also form a part of our study. It is not the object of this thesis to discuss the Vedic religion in detail. All that is intended here is to show the rural bias of the Vedic religion only by way of a few illustrations, for Vedic religion is too big a subject and needs separate treatment by itself.

All over the word the rural people have a greater predisposition to religion than what urban people have. The dependence of agriculture--the basic form of production in the countryside-- on the hitherto unmastered forces of nature like rains and the near absence of scientific culture, which provides a correct understanding of the natural and social worlds, among the rural people, are the two main reasons for the greater degree of religiosity among them.

As we have already seen in the previous pages the Vedic people were rural folks and were mainly agricultural and pastoral. There were simple, life-loving people and used to live with nature. Drought, lack of fertility, excessive rains and some such other raveges of nature must have afflicted them now and then. They were deeply affected by the apparently mysterious working of the awe-inspiring forces of nature. The sun, the mountain, the ocean, the forest--all these aspects of nature evoked their sense of awe and wonder. "Their hymns reflect in places that primitive attitude of mind which looks upon all nature as a living presence, or

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an aggregate of the animated entities.The luminaries who follow a fixed course across the sky are the devas (lit., the shining ones)or gods .Naturally the sense of the dependence of human welfare on the powprs of nature,the unexplained mysteries of whose working invests them with almost a "super-natural"or divine character,finds its expression in various forms of worship.[1]"

The Āryans were simple rural folk as yet uninfluenced by urban sophistication and scientific training.Their attempt to account for the various forces and phenomena of nature which confronted them,led to the rise of myths. Besides assuming personal gods behind the awe-inspiring aspects of natunre,they also attributed divine qualities to the various things used by them.The process of personification of these natural events,so closely related to their rural,pastoral and agricultural life, made a gradual progress and the personified phenomena was defied. Thus,the sun,wind,forest,river and earth are defied.They defied even their agricultural appliances.Śunāsīra[2]is supposed to refer to the two deities favourable to the growth of crops.Roth [3]regards these two agricultural dieties as the

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1. The Vedic Age ,360.
2. R.V.IV.57,5.8;A.V.III.17,5;Maitt.Sam.I.7,12;Vaj.Sam. XII.69,etc.
3. Roth,St.Petersburg Dictionary ,s.v.

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personification of'the share and the plough'.The diety Kṣetrasya-Pati,[3a]'lord of the fields', should probably be understood as the god presiding over each field,just as Vāstoṣ-pati presided over each dwelling.[3b] For agriculture the importance of rain,sunshine and air is obvious.Indra was conceived as the producer of rain.He was supposed to release the waters and cause them flow so that drought,great enemy of agriculture was averted.He is described again and again as freeing the streams.Indra freed the rivers from the grip of a demon Vṛtra.[4]The demon lay like a dark snake across the slopes.The rivers were brought to a stand still ((tastabhānāḥ);when the demon was struck by the Indras shattering weapon (vajra),the ground buckled,the stones rolled away like chariot wheels,the pent-up waters flowed over the demon's recumbent body.[5]

We have already seen that cattle constituted the greatest wealth in the rural agricultural economy of the Vedic Āryans.Puṣan is described as the path-finder for the domestic beasts.It is through his grace that the cattle proceed along the right track and come back home safely.

3a. R.V.IV.37,1.2;VII.35,10;X.66,13;A.V.II.8,5;Vaj.Sam.XVI. 18.

3b. Macdonell,Vedic Mythology,136.

4. R.V.I.80,11;II.11,9.10;VI.17,9;I.80,14;I.32,5;I.61,10; X.89,7;I.32,7;I.52,15;III.32,4;V.32,5;VI.20,2;IV.19,2; V.30,9;II.11,5;II.14,2;IV.19,9;VIII.76,4;V.32,1.2;II. 11,2;III.26,9;IV.17,1;I.32,11;I.80,8etc.

5. R.V.IV.19,4-8;II.15,3.

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In the Rigveda he is called anaśtapaśu, 'losing no kine.'[6] "Very probably, he was originally a solar deity standing for the beneficent pow er of the sun manifested chiefly in its pastoral aspect."[7]

We have already referred to the role of Agni in the rural life of the Vedic people. The Rigveda describes Agni as the clearer of forests and preparer of the way for new settlements.[8] With the assistance of Agni the Aryans burnt the jungles, drove away the hostile Dasyus and made the ground suitable for permament settlement. Agni by burning the weeds and bushes prepared the grounds for cultivation.[9] "Agni, a personification of the sacrificial fire, presents in its conception the household life of the Vedic Aryans, and is second in importance only to Indra whose conception presents their external life of struggle and conquest."[10] At different occasions he is identified with the cattle also.[11]

Rudra was a typical folk deity of the Aryans personifying all that the cattle owner fears-storm and plague. One of his adjectives was Paśupati.[12] This epithet reflects a popular idea. As the cattle were exposed to attacks by wild

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6. R.V.X.12,2; Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, P.36.
7. The Vedic Age 367.
8. R.V.I.85,4; VIII.60,12.
9. R.V.II.4,7.
10. The Vedic Age, 373.
11. R.V.I.38,5; V.2,12; X.8,1 etc.
12. Sat.Br.VI.1,3,7.

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beasts or theft by robbers and to various other perils, divine protection was sought for them.

They also attributed divinity to plants with particular reference to their efficacy in healing diseases.[13] Forests have also been looked upon as deities.[14] The Vedic Aryans appear to have believed in the existence of spirits of forests, trees and plants. In fact, they used to worship them.[15] Spirits of a dangerous nature were believed to haunt the forests; this was the precursor of similar beliefs widespread among the people, particularly of villages, even today.

Land, being a prized possession of the rural agricultural people of the Vedic age, was also personified as a deity (Pṛthvi)[15a] both alone and with Div, 'heaven', as Dyāvā-Pṛthivi.[16] The goddess is described as the 'first born of beings.' Its riches (Vitta) are referred to. She is styled as Vasu-mati, 'full of wealth.'

The Aryans defied almost everythings that they regarded important in their life. Even their popular drinks Soma has been defied and the entire ninth maṇḍala of the Rigveda and six hymns from other maṇḍalas are devoted to

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13. R.V.X.97; A.V.I.136,1 etc.
14. R.V.X.146.
15. R.V.X.97.
15a. R.V.IV.3,5;51,11;V.49,5;84,1 et seq.;VI.50,13.14;VII. 34,23 etc.;Vaj.Sam.,XII.103,etc.
16. R.V.IV.56,1;VII.53,1 etc.;Macdonell,Vedic Mythology, P.20,21,123,126.

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Soma. A sense of gratitude appears to underlie in these cases. Fear-complex appears to have motivated the deification of certain phenomena. A sense of awe and wonder drove them to imagine the various aspects of nature as so many gods. Their relation with gods was based on reciprocity. They offered prayers and sacrifices and in returned they wanted from gods to give them long life, riches and protection from enemies.

It may further be pointed out that the rural bais of the Vedic religion may be seen in the description of their gods. They are not the ethereal spirit or the metaphysical entities of later Indian philosophy. They are not formless abstractions although a small number of abstract deities such as Śraddhā (faith), Manyu (agger) etc. appear, specially in the last maṇḍala of the Rigveda. Most of the gods have anthropomorphic traits, some having even theriomorphic characteristics. like human beings they have various limbs, weapons, chariot etc. They also subsist on food such as are used by ordinary people. They are also fond of drinks specially Somarasa. The imagery of the Aryans regarding their gods has a rural bias and was influenced by the surroundings of the countryside. We have the description of the sacrificers calling the Maruts like cows.[17] Worshipperr approaches Agni as cows go to the house.[18] Indra flings enemies far away just as a cowherd drives cattle hither and thither.[19] He acts like a milk-yielding cow towards

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17. R.V.1.38,2.
18. R.V.1.66,5.
19. R.V.V.31,1.

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the sacrificer.[20] Hymns are described to make sound in the honour of Soma just as cows low in the pasture ground.[21] Indra is requested to dissuade his devotee from evil as a cow satisfied with a feed of grass, turns its calf away.[22] The Aryans conceived their gods as one possessing the frailties of human nature. The whole tone and temper of these imageries are peculiarly rural. We have the description of Usas manifesting her bosom like the udders manifested by a cow at the time of milching.[23] Vanaspati, the lord of forest and vegetation, is asked to stretch itself like the thighs of a woman about to deliver a child.[24] The imageries have a rustic air bordering to vulgarity and do not evince any urban sophistication.

It may further be pointed out that the Vedic conception of gods and the Vedic prayers have a directness and simplicity which mark the nature of unsophistication in rural people. Unlike the later age, not much mysticism surrounds the gods and prayrs of the Vedic Aryans. They did not consider themselves as mere supplicants depending on the mercy of gods. Their prayers are for temporal bliss. They did not bother much about the other world nor did they aspire for immortality, release from bondage of rebirth etc.

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20. R.V.VIII.33,6.
21. R.V.IX.94,2.
22. R.V.II.16,8.
23. R.V.I.92,4.
24. R.V.V.78,5.

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The religious thought betrays a practical streak.

Thus the most striking feature of the rural religion of the Vedic age was its dynamic conception of the universe, i.e.,the conception of the universe as a theatre of the interplay of conscious freely acting elements.The rural religion unfolds such worlds as Pitralok, Pretlok, Devalok, disembodied spirits,gods and goddesses,as also the celestial world.It also,in addition conjures up worlds peopled by such deities as those of fertility,various epidemics,rivers and forests. In fact,the rural religion of the Vedic age sees spirits practically behind all phenomena and creates a phantasmagoria of numerous uncanny worlds of spirits.

It is not unreasonable for the Aryans to assume that the humanized gods should share some human weakness and be susceptible to flattery and gifts.Sacrefices were offered to a variety of gods and goddesses to win divine favour. It was yet only a means of influencing the gods in favour of the offerer."If we remember that the Rigveda Saṃhitā is composed of earlier and later portions,it will be easy to understand how,on the one hand,a large number of the hymns arose independently of all sacrificial ritual,although many of these were used later on for sacrificial purposes,and how on the one hand,many other hymns from the first intended for nothing but sacrificial songs of litanies."[25]

The gṛiha karmani were the sacrifices of the simplest type and were performed by the house holders at birth,marriage

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25. The Vedic Age,377.

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and other occasions of daily life,at funerals and ancestor-worship,as well as at the ceremonies for ensuring the fertility of the cattle and the growth of fruits of the field. Incantations in the tenth mandala of the Rigveda represent popular religion consisting of spells to defeat rivals,to prevent and cure diseases and to repel noxious animals.The sacrifices were also offered to a variety of gods and goddesses.There are the food god (Annadevatā),the gods of different diseases,the rain god and a plethora of others.

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CHAPTER – VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Indian culture, through the ages of its history, has essentially been rural in its character. Even today, village continues to be the unchanging back-bone of Indian economic and social life. India in the early historical period retained its rural agricultural character not only in economy but also in its social pattern and ideology. Village in the Vedic age lived almost and independent, atomistic, self-sufficient social and economic existence. Self sufficient village economy was based on an equilibrium between the village agriculture and the village artisan industry.

State Museum (7230) Lucknow

In the Vedas the terms village is generally denoted by the word "Grāma." The Sanskrit word 'Grāma' may originally have had reference to a tribal grouping of a limited number of families. Vedic evidences indicate that in the beginning the words relating to village have no direct reference to the grouping or aggregation of land. The connotations regarding the village, in the Vedas, indicate that originally it was not a territorial but an essential human unit. It signified 'body of men' or relationship based on blood rather than locality. The Bharatas in one passage of the Rigveda are referred to as a horde seeking cows (Gavyan Grāmaḥ). The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa preserves the memory of semi-permanent Aryan village pattern of hunting and food gathering stage, which gradually gave way to settled and permanent village pattern under the pressure of agricultural economy.

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Vedic literature preserves very valuable evidence on the early reaches of Indian culture.The Rigveda gives us valuable information regarding the earlier stages of social development, from the semi nomadic-pastoral stage to settled agricultural mode of existence.It is a unique document of the people from the moving to the settled life,incidentally giving information of the settlement pattern,origin of agrarian economy and various aspects of symopolitical institutions.We can study the socio-economic development of the village through the evolution of meaning of such significant words as 'Árya';Carṣaṇi', 'Pritishtha-kama';Vṛjan','Pastya' etc.

The earliest Aryans in India seem to have advanced from hunting and foodgathering stage.The transition from hunting to domestication of animals and from foodgathering to food production was indeed,a very big change in the process of civilization,which inevitably reflected itself in the building up of a community life within a frame-work of a comparative economic society.

The cow played and important role in the economy of the Aryan settlers.Davis in his evolution of War says that pastoral tribes are nomads.The evidences regarding cattle-forays in the Vedas may have had reference to actual fights in secular skirmishes.The very fact of cowb predominance in life of the Vedic Aryans is sufficient proof that they had reached a settled stage of existence because the cow is unfit for a nomadic life and is incapable of bearing the hardship

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of continual change and marching.Further,pastoral farming requires a settled life.In the Vedas the word Grāma seems chiefly to indicate the sort of protected residence site into which cattle could be driven at night or to escape attack.In the Rigveda 'Kṣitir Dhurvā' secure dwelling is mentioned in a context that shows it to be equivalent to the Vṛajana or Grāma regarded as a stronghold.In the Rigveda use of the word Gotra also indicates that the people who lived with their cows under the same cowshed came to belong to the same Gotra,which did not indicate descent from the same ancestor in the age of the Rigveda.The Rigveda indicates an advance from the hunting and foodgathering stage and some sort of permanent collective dwelling led to the evolution of villages. The Vedic village was indeed and aggregate of several families, each family lived in detached houses within a boundary or enclosure and was presided by the father or the eldest brother called Kulapā or Kulapati.

The rise of the village is bound up with the rise of agricultural economy in history.This event marked a land-mark in the history of mankind,inaugurating a higher phase of social existence.The village--the first settled form of collective human habitation and the product of the growth of agricultural economy-- thus historically gave birth to rural society.The new settlers of the Vedic age in calling themselves 'Ārya' had not forgotten the original significance of the word which is derived from the root 'Ṛi'which means to plough .Agriculture

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necessiates permanent sojourn of the cultivating community in one place.No single family can settle alone.Clearing of forests,need for cooperation for defence against wild animals injurious to crops and even to human life and for carrying out cottage building,tank digging,forest clearing, and other initial works is obvious.

For village settlements jungles had to be cleared . The early Vedic Aryans seem to have adopted a quick and less toilsome method of getting rid of jungles,namely by burning it.The frequency with which the epithet Pathi-krt is applied to Agni suggests that there is an allusion to fire burning the primaeval fire.

Village lands require irrigation of various kinds ; this is obviously opposed to easily shifted cultivation : it also requires fixed fields and a determination of shares in water. Artificial means of irrigation was known to the early Vedic Aryans and it was also a factor inviting some sort of aggregation of cultivators resulting in the foundation of village settlements.The Vedic evidence clearly shows that the Grāma or village which originally denoted 'a body of men'ultimately came to signify an assemblage of cultivators in a certain locality for purposes of agriculture.

Thus the genesis of village settlements is closely related to the connection of the settled people with the land.In the Vedic literature we have repeated references

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to the conqueste of fields and their attachment to land was a very great factor in the establishment of settled mode of existence.Joint family system is amply established by the Vedic evidence.The whole family was tied to the land and its coporate interest secured in its cultivation and improvement."On inquiring into the growth in India of proprietory rights in land,we find the joint family at its very origin. The village was at first,and still is in a large degree,a group of such families,often all sprung from or appendant to a central family."The question of peasant proprietorship has a direct bearing on the genesis of village in the Vedic age.In view of the evidences of both individual and joint ownership of land in the Vedic age it would not be incorrect to presume that both individual and joint ownership of land existed side by side,the latter being apparently the earlier but decadent stage and in t he process of evolution the factors related to both may have equally contributed to the genesis of the village in the early Vedic age.

The Vedic village was a group of houses,built near each other for purposes of safety ,and was surrounded by some kind of a hedge as a protective barrier against enfmies. It seems that the practise of constructing defence wall around the cities in subsequent ages was a development of the Vedic practice of constructing defence wall around their villages.References to Mahāgramah (large villages)would indicate that some of them grew fairly big in size. The

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Vedic evidence clearly testifies that the villages were built in close juxtaposition to each other and were connected by roads.

It seems that the art of house-building was quite developed even in the early Vedic age. In the Vedas we come across various terms about the architectural lay-out and different parts of the building. The Vedic Aryans observed certain rites and rituals connected with the laying of foundation of and first entrance to dwelling houses. It seems that many of the basic elements of house building in the later periods were developed in the Vedic times.

Fort planning in ancient India dates back to the Vedic period. Pura signified a 'rampart', or 'fort' or stronghold. The pura or earth-work fortifications may either have been a part of the village or just out side it, to be resorted to in the times of emergency. In the early Vedic literature the word 'Pura' did not bear any urban significance. Vedic literature hardly seems to go beyond the village, no doubt with modification in the later period. The word 'Nagara' is of late occurance and it is hardly likely that in early Vedic times city life was much developed.

Professor Macdonell and Keith hold that the village or Grāma in the Vedic period can hardly be said to have been a political unit. However if the expression 'political unit' connotes administrative unit, it may not be possible to agree with their opinion. It may be noted that the king's share

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in a village is referred to as early as the Atharvaveda. It can be understood only if we regard the village as an administrative unit. Further it may be pointed out that the use of the word ksetra (field) in the Rigveda points clearly to the existence of separate fields carefully measured off. This would have no significance if the villages were not an administrative units. The Yajuraveda refers to Grāmyavādin which according to Macdonell and Keith apparently means a 'village-judge'. It indicates that village(Grāma)was regarded as a unit of administration for judicial purposes also. In the Vedas the word 'Vis'has been used with distressing vagueness and has so many signification. When interpreted etemologically 'Vis'may suggest the settlements of the Aryans, the Grāma. Vis can-not be taken to denote a subdivision of the Vedic tribal state. It was essentially a human unit whose precise nature cannot be determined. Even the word Jana has some times been used as a synonym of Grāma. In the Rigveda III.33,11, the Bharata Jana are called gavyan gramah.

The administrative organization of the Veidc age was essentially rural in conception and the Vedic state can be described as a rural kingdom. In the early Vedic literature there is no evidence of large kingdoms or any significant development of urban life. Even in the later Vedic age when territorial element had asserted itself and the Jana or the tribal state had assumed the form of Janapada or territorial state the rural character of kingdom had not changed

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in any remarkable manner. In this period political janapadas were being formed and each janapada had its capitals, but the excavated remains are not those of even a township. Evidently the rulers of the early janapadas had head-quarters that were not very different from rural settlements, at best relatively larger.

The head of the village was called Grāmiṇī or leader of the Grama. He was the keystone of the village constitution. He played an important role in the political life of the period. It seems that the importance of the office of the Grāmiṇī considerably increased during the later Vedic age. Grāmiṇī as a ratnin, was a high functionary of the state and might have been selected on the principle of class and caste representation. The term Vaiśya-Grāmiṇī may also indicate that he (Grāmiṇī) was the head of the people (Viś) living in the village. Another important functionary of the village was Vrājapati who was incharge of the pasture grounds and later he became identical with the Grāmiṇī. Purapati was the chief over a fort when it was actually occupied against hostile attack. Śatapatā, lord of a hundred villages, indicates that the Vedic state was a vast rural kingdom. Other village officials of the Vedic age were Adhikṛta and Gāmyavādin.

Since ancient times, the Aryans as a race seem to have exhibited an innate desire to settle their social, religious or political questions in an assembly of their own. The Vedic Sabhā was a village assembly and played an important role in the life of the village community. References to Sabhā found in the Vedic literature are not merely to the single

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king's assembly in the capital town, but to minor village assemblies also. It performed judicial functions also. Thus the village assembly (Sabhā) was perhaps different from the one attended by the kings in the capital towns. Political activity of a royal pair in the Sabha as described in the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā may suggest that the Vedic kings were in close contact with the villages.

The average state of the early Vedic period consisted of only a few square miles. It had a capital not much larger than a dozen villages comprised in it. Village formed the basis of the constitution of the central assembly, the Samiti, and those who werewassembled in it were 'villages together' (Saṃgrāma). It seems that the Vidatha was a local village congregation which was largely responsible for the performance of religious ceremonies and perhaps that is the reason that most of the writers on the political institution of India have either ignored the Vidatha completely or have just mentioned it in passing.

Among the institution that comprise a rural society, the family is the most important. The Vedic village comprised of several families. The unit of social formation was the family living under a common head, the father or the elder brother called Kulapa. The Aryans developed their social institution according to their own needs. The first condition of progress in an early society lies in its capacity for organization. The varṇa system of the Aryans provided the

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internal mechanism of the village community system and stablized it socially and ideologically.It filled the vital demand concerning its material needs.The early Vedic society was classified but casteless.The transition from the casteless, though classified,society of the early Vedic Āryans to the caste system of the later Vedic age may be traced to the complication of life resulting from the transition of pastoral and nomadic pattern of life to settled mode of rural existence. It provided the social foundation to the village by providing "an alterable division of labour "in society,whereby "the whole machinism discloses a systematic division of labour" which is regulated"with the irresistable authority of a law of Nature."

Dr. A.S.Altekar'sPosition of Women in Hindu Civilization contains a good deal of critical analysis on the position of women in the early stages of Indian history.Dr.B.S. Upadhyaya's Women in the Rgveda is also a valuable monograph. Western orientalists like C.Bader and J.J.Mayer have also admired the ideal of self-sacreficing Indian womenhood.But an essential requisite for the proper understanding of the position of Women in a given age is to study the problem not in an isolated manner but in the context of the material culture of the society concerned.Scholars like Shakuntala Rao,Indradeva and P.Thomas have provided ample evidence of sexual freedom and comparatively higher status of women in the early Vedic times.Dr.Altekar thinks that the participation of women in public production such as agriculture and

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manufacture of cloth,bow and arrows etc. was at the root of better status of women in the Vedic age.If women in the rural life of the Vedic age enjoyed a position "much better than what we ordinarily expect it to have been",it was because of her ability to share in the work of that community.Dr.Altekar holds that "as a rule in a community, which is civilized and moving in search of pastures fresh and new,women occupy an honourable place."Even if we do not accept the materialistic interpretation of history,it is certain that the society in the early Vedic period had certainly gone beyond the stage of gathering and hunting but it was predominantly pastoral and nomadic,and did not produce enough surplus to allow any section of society to be completely subordinated or to be withdrawn from the process of production.In the early rural life of the country relationships between sexes were based on reciprocity and not on subordination.Women took part in the village assembly,Sabhā. Rigveda refers to a women as Sabhāvatī.The hope was expressed that the bride should be able to speak with composure in public assemblies down to her old age.

Self-sufficient food-producing agrarian economy was the basic feature of the rural life in the Vedic age.Aryans produced a number of grains.In the Vedic Civilization,which was predominantly pastoral and agricultural,milk was one of the principal ingredients of food.Meat,fruits and vegetables also formed a part of the dietary of the Aryans in the Vedic age.Soma was the most popular drink of the Aryans.

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Another beverage of the Vedic period was Sura.

Aryans were fond of good dress and had made significant progress in the art of weaving garments. Āryans, both men and women, decorated themselves with ornaments.

Among the amusements of the people dicing and chariot race was most popular. Music, both vocal and instrumental was a popular mode of entertainment. There are references to dancing also. A.B.Keith thinks that the dramatic spectacles, of religious character were known in the early Vedic age. Hunting was practised not only as profession but as a sport as well.

The Vedas suggest that the vast mass of knowledge was the outcome of discussions and deliberations not of the town but of villages, thus pointing to the rural importance of our culture. The learning and culture of the Vedic Aryans was chiefly the product of her hermitages situated in the solitude of forests. The learning of the forests was embodied in the books specially designed as Āraṇyakas, "belonging to the forests." Indian civilization in its early stages had been mainly rural and sylvan and not urban.

The practice of medicine was regarded as a respectable profession. Vedic texts refer to a large number of diseases. The chief curative and preventive consisted of not only healing herbs, but also of charms, water and amulets. The rural folk of the Vedic age also believed in Ghosts, spirits, demigods, goblins, imps, demons, gandharvas and apsarās. They also seem to have believed in magic.

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The Āryans of the Vedic age seem to have reached moral and ethical hights which has not been surpassed in the subsequent periods of history.

Agriculture was the most important occupation of the rural people of the Vedic age.Land were classified as waste-land (Khila or Khilya),forests (Aranya)and cultivated land. The use of the word Ksetra (field)in the Rigveda points clearly to the existence of fields carefully measured off . The Aryan villagers used ~~to~~ artificial water channels for irrigation.They used plough for tilling the soil.The advance of plough-using agrarian village economy over tribal India was a great historical achievement.The main agricultural operations as summed up in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa are ploughing,sowing,reaping and threshing.The value of manure was appreciated as early as the Rigvedic times.Barley,rice and wheat seem to have been the staple food of the Āryans. They also produced a great variety of grains.In the Vedic texts we find distinct reference to the rotation of crops. We have also charms and spells for the protection of the crop. Cattle-breeding was the most important occupation of the Āryans and it was a great factor which contributed to their advance from nomadic pastoral stage to settled mode of existence.We have evidences which points to the private ownership of land even as early as the Rigvedic age.Trade and commerce was originally based on barter system and cow was the unit of wealth.Spinning and weaving as a village industry obtained a firm footing in the Vedic age. Carpenter

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was a familiar figure in the Vedic village.Pottery making and leather work was also resorted to.The most important occupations of the villagers were those of farmers,herdsmen, agriculturists,weavers, blacksmiths etc.

Chariot was a quick mode of transport in this age. Anas was a draft wagon and Śakaṭa denoted a cart whose creaking sound could be heard at night in the forests.

The spirit of cooperation was a distinct feature of the early rural life of the Vedic age. The rural life of the Vedic age assured the advantages of corporate life to its members.The working of the communal idea which kept the countryside pulsating with the exuberance of life is seen in the Vedic literature in the tribal feeling of Viś.The Vedic Sabhā served as a modern club house.

The Vedic village lived almost an independent,atomistic, self-sufficient economic existence.The villagers were closely knit together by economic bonds of diverse sort.Self-sufficient village economy was based on an equilibrium between village agriculture and village artisan industry. The self-contained village of the Vedic age may be described as a sort of small republic.

All over the world the rural people have a greater predisposition to religion than what urban people have.The dependence of agriculture-the basic form of production in the countryside-on the hither-to unmastered forces of nature like rains and the near absence of scientific culture led the Aryans to invest these natural phenomenon with almost a super-natural

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or divine character and it found expression in various forms of worship.The religious belief of the Āryans shows a rural bias.Their imagery regarding the gods was profoundly influenced by the surroundings of the countryside.Their conceeption of gods and their prayers have a directness and simplicity which mark the nature of the rural people. The religious thought betrays a practical streak.

We may,in conclusion,summarise very briefly the principal results of our inquiry as to the history of the rural life in the Vedic age. They may be stated under the following heads:

1. Āryans in the earliest stage of their civilization disclose a strong tendency towards mutual support and cooperation in economic matters as well as for the sake of defence.

2. The most natural form of such unions for defence and cooperation was that of the village.

3. The Vedic village was a political unit with Grāmiṇī as its head.The village assembly(Sabhā)transacted "a few items of the simple village government of the age ag It also performed judicial functions.

4. The Vedic state was a rural kingdom and even the rulers of the early janapadas had their headquarters at places that were not very different from the rural settlements,at best relatively large.

5. The advance of agrarian village economy over tribal country was the first great revolution in India.

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6. The Varna system of society supplied the social foundation to the village community system in the Vedic age.

7. The Indian rural people have a long and rich history of aesthetic culture.

8. Religion played a vital role in determining the life process of the earliest rural society in India.

9. The theory of Metcalfe and Maine regarding the changeless character of ancient Indian village communities is to be accepted with great reservations. Both internal and external forces have been working out changes in the rural life of the country through the ages.

10. In the Vedic age, atleast, it seems quite probable that each village was a sort of small republic.

11. In India acculturation has been a slow process and it can best be seen in the rural life of our country.

12. India is a classical land of villages and the entire Indian culture has a rural bias.

13. The rural life of India is undergoing a transformation under the impact of modern civilization but it would be really unfortunate if we do not retain its basic characteristic features.

14. History of India is the history and culture of the rural prople and the government should give due importance to the development/of the community life of the rural areas of the country.

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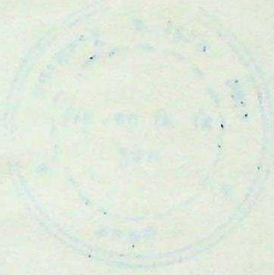

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